

DÆDALUS

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
SUMMER 1988 \$5.00

THREE DECADES OF *DÆDALUS*



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Three Decades of *Dædalus*

Summer 1988

Issued as Volume 117, Number 3, of the *Proceedings*
of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences



Summer 1988, "Three Decades of Dædalus." Issued as Volume 117, Number 3, of the Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

© 1988 by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 136 Irving Street, Cambridge, MA 02138

Library of Congress Catalog Number 12-30299.

Editorial Offices: Dædalus, Norton's Woods, 136 Irving Street, Cambridge, MA 02138.

Dædalus (ISSN 0011-5266) is published quarterly by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Subscription rate: \$16, one year; \$24, two years; \$32, three years.

All subscription orders, single-copy orders, and change-of-address information must be sent in writing to the Dædalus Business Office, P.O. Box 515, Canton, MA 02021, U.S.A. (Telephone: 617-828-8450). Orders for single copies must be accompanied with prepayment of \$5.00.

Printed in the United States of America.

Printing Office: 2901 Byrdhill Road, Richmond, VA 23228.

U.S.A. newsstand distribution by Eastern News Distributors, Inc., 1130 Cleveland Road, Sandusky, OH 44870.

Second-class postage paid at Canton, Massachusetts, and at additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: send address changes to DÆDALUS, P.O. Box 515, Canton, MA 02021, U.S.A.



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Preface to the Issue

“Three Decades of *Dædalus*”

DÆDALUS, the Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, shares with certain other institutions the distinction of having impeccable intellectual antecedents together with a somewhat ambiguous birthdate. If regular publication as a quarterly journal is the definition of birth, then 1958 is clearly the year of the origin of *Dædalus*, and the year 1988 is incontestably the time to celebrate the Journal's thirtieth anniversary. If, however, the title *Dædalus* is the significant datum, then the year 1955 becomes significant, for it was in May of that year that the *Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, first launched in 1846, acquired a new name. The *Proceedings*, published intermittently since 1846, had reached Volume 86 by May 1955, when the Editor of the Academy, Walter Muir Whitehill, announced the Academy's intention to launch a new kind of publication, which, in its “experimental stage,” would appear at irregular intervals. In fact, four issues were published in the next three years.

In 1846, when the *Proceedings* were originally launched, one of the more active proponents of the new publication had been the mathematician Benjamin Pierce, who hoped to persuade Fellows to publish “such of the proceedings of the Academy as may seem to them calculated to advance the interests of science.” In the next century scientific papers appeared most predominantly in the *Proceedings*, touching on a vast number of subjects in the physical and the biological sciences, both theoretical and applied. No controversy in this period was more public than the one that began in 1859, with

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the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species*. Involving Asa Gray and Louis Agassiz, both prominent in the Academy, the controversy became very intense when the full impact of Darwin's findings were realized. Asa Gray, a frequent contributor to the Academy's *Proceedings*, was persuaded that Darwin's hypotheses accorded admirably with the empirical evidence he and other botanists had been gathering over the years. Determined to refute the theological and scientific arguments of those whom he believed to be less informed, who persisted in their errors, the debates gave new life to the Academy.

In the decades that followed, as the older colleges of the country transformed themselves and as new universities, both state and private, appeared, as laboratory science became increasingly important, the *Proceedings* reflected the new professional interests of chemists, physicists, astronomers, and others. While Foreign Honorary Members, who had been important in the Academy from the time of its founding in 1780, continued to be prominent among the Academy's Fellows, very few contributed to the *Proceedings*. Major humanists abroad, including von Ranke and Mommsen in Germany, Thiers in France, and Tennyson, Carlyle, and Ruskin in England, accepted membership without being asked to write for the *Proceedings*. Indeed, by the beginning of the twentieth century, the Academy's membership, like its *Proceedings*, was predominantly scientific, and as scientists came increasingly to have their own specialized journals to which they contributed, the availability of the *Proceedings* meant less to them. While the continued fidelity of Fellows like Percy Bridgman in physics and Harlow Shapley in astronomy and a number of others in chemistry and biology guaranteed that the *Proceedings* would remain an important scientific publication, the Academy's commitment was clearly to the publication of scientific research results much more than to any broad discussion of major philosophical, pedagogical, social, or political issues.

It was really the Second World War, much more than the First, that provided the impetus to a major change in the Academy with respect to its publication policies. Even before the actual outbreak of the war, a number of Fellows, led by Hudson Hoagland and Harlow Shapley, were beginning to be concerned with the problem of science and values. There was increasing talk of the possibility of the Academy sponsoring a new quarterly magazine that would assess

and strengthen democratic ideals. Alfred North Whitehead, at the Academy in the early 1940s, spoke of "a new crisis of civilization" in which "the whole of learned thought is transforming every activity of mankind." Harlow Shapley, in his role as President of the Academy, believed that attention should be given to the problems that would certainly develop in the world after the war and that they should become a prime concern of the Academy's publication policies.

To that moment, almost all the intellectual leadership in the Academy had been scientific. In October 1944, a new President, a leading scholar of American literature, Howard Mumford Jones, assumed the presidency. Believing that the pace of specialization had created enormous problems for the Academy, he argued that the problem was not "whether a common language can be artificially reinstituted among learned men, but whether the Academy is not charged with the duty of creating a common climate of opinion." He went on to say, "My observation is that the research spirit does not depend upon a vocabulary but upon an exciting philosophy of values." In his view, institutions flourish or fail "in proportion as they dare to foster great projects . . . and embark upon great and important programs." In his inaugural address, Jones gave a new definition of what the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and its publications might be. He followed through by appointing the Commission on the Present Status and Future of the Academy, chaired by Kirtley Mather and including a number of Fellows who were not scientists. The Commission recommended major changes in the character of the *Proceedings*. In 1954 this was made even more explicit when the Publications Committee of the Academy agreed that the *Proceedings* should include "articles of broader interest," that an experimental new publication entitled *Dædalus* should be launched, and that while its purpose should not be "popularization," it ought to be of general interest.

David McCord explained the appropriateness of the title *Dædalus* when he wrote in May 1955 that:

It is from Dædalus the father that we have borrowed the title for the new journal of our Academy. We have borrowed it for the simple reason that Dædalus enjoyed the composite reputation of being a scientist, a craftsman, a poser as well as a solver of riddles; and an individual, for all his human faults, who was likewise an architect, a sculptor, a naturalist, a metal worker, coiner of money, inventor of the ax, plummet, auger, and glue; a

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man of spirit, and something more than a dreamer in that he proved himself one of the best and most practical of escapists.

Dædalus, launched in 1955, became a quarterly in 1958, and its new editor, Gerald Holton, announced its intention when he wrote: "With this issue, *Dædalus* continues its ascent to the goal which clearly beckons: to give the intellectual community a strong voice of its own." Holton went on to say, "The journal is now to be a quarterly and a medium through which leading scholars in all fields can address one another." In some sense, the *Proceedings* had begun with a comparable intention when it began to be published before the Civil War, but the rapid changes in scholarship and society, beginning late in the nineteenth century and accelerating in the twentieth, made any such large purpose impossible. Only a new journal, committed explicitly to scholarship in all disciplines, seeking contributions that would be meaningful to readers in many professions, both in the United States and abroad, could satisfy a craving that had not existed at an earlier date.

It is not an accident that *Dædalus* was launched in the years immediately after the Second World War, when American scholarship had achieved new renown, when there was so much ambition to create a more critical understanding of issues that threatened the peace of the world. The intention, from the beginning, was to involve Fellows of the Academy as authors, but to engage many who were not, to attend to critical public policy issues while not neglecting those that related more specifically to scholarship and education at every level. In the context of 1958, publication involving foreign authors was not only congenial but mandatory.

In a very few years *Dædalus* devised conference and editorial procedures which made consultation between authors both easy and frequent. Almost all articles were commissioned after initial planning by small groups specially convened to meet at the House of the Academy or when more convenient, at some site abroad. The authors, assembled in closed meetings, often for several days, became the referees of their colleagues' draft essays. From the start, because the Journal aspired to belong to no single discipline, to reflect no one political or ideological orthodoxy, the task of bringing together men and women of disparate opinions who would not necessarily agree

but could be counted on to maintain civilized discourse became the prerequisite for publication.

In 1960, when *Dædalus* published a special issue on arms control, it expressed sentiments that became increasingly central to its purpose. Arms control was seen as a new problem, different in essentials from what politicians, statesmen, lawyers, and others had been considering in the 1920s and 1930s when they discussed specific proposals for disarmament. The atom bomb had created a new kind of hazard in the world, requiring wholly new kinds of thinking. In this new era, there would be disagreements, inevitably, and these needed to be understood and aired. So, also, in 1964 and 1965, when *Dædalus* published two issues on the American Negro, and in 1967, when it chose to produce an issue on race and color both in the United States and abroad, it was establishing several points: that all such inquiry demanded the participation of scholars and others coming from many professions and disciplines, that there would never be agreement among them, that a new kind of candor was necessary if such matters were to be treated seriously.

Also, increasingly, *Dædalus* considered subjects not yet very high on the nation's intellectual agenda. In 1967 it published an important issue looking toward the year 2000; the concern was not to prophesy, but to consider how one could think about the future and prepare for it. Two years later, an issue on the ethical aspects of experimentation with human subjects appeared; the published work on that subject in 1969 could have been accommodated on a single library shelf. *Dædalus*, with its interdisciplinary purpose, was seeking always to open up new fields, to provide new perspectives on subjects that called out for critical reflection. It seemed as reasonable to add to the already abundant literature that existed on a subject like adolescence as to open wholly novel paths in addressing a matter like adulthood.

Increasingly, education at the higher level, in the universities but also at the primary and secondary school levels, became major concerns of the Journal. The "troubles" of the late sixties accelerated this interest, but it was grounded in a more fundamental concern: whether the values and methods once thought adequate in education were still sufficient and if not, what could be changed. Defense, in all its dimensions, on land, in space, became prime concerns. So, also, increased attention was given to the problems of health, to medicine

more generally, but also to issues touching on human rights, aging, and the like.

If the *Proceedings* of the Academy in the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth had dwelled almost exclusively on scientific developments, and indeed on the results of specific scientific research, *Dædalus* had no desire to abandon the interest in theoretical advancements in science. While the Journal would no longer print scientific papers in the classic sense of that term, science continued to figure prominently. Whether the subject was science and culture, the limits of scientific inquiry, evolution and human progress, scientific literacy, science and its public, or modern technology, and of course whenever contemporary scholarship more generally came to be reviewed, science had its place. Still, these were not like the research papers published in more specialized professional journals. *Dædalus* knew that its commitment had to be to another kind of inquiry, to another kind of scholarship.

Responding to incentives created by the intellectual conditions of mid- and late-twentieth-century life, and aspiring to represent all the major scholarly disciplines in a way that was not being done by other publications, *Dædalus* made substantial commitments to studies in the humanities and the social sciences, broadly defined. Whether an issue of *Dædalus* was about Gibbon or Rousseau, film or opera, religion or philanthropy, myth or utopia, whether it dealt with the archaic world or the modern, Western Europe or Africa, the oil crisis or the problems of the environment and the city, the family or the state, the intention of the Journal was always to open itself to new problems, to create a publication that could be read by men and women in all professions and all disciplines, hopefully with profit and understanding. In a time when specialization was more intense than ever, when many scholarly journals became so technical as to be beyond the understanding of all but the most highly qualified in a specific discipline, it was particularly important to have a publication like *Dædalus* that would aim to reach a broader audience and to make even the most abstruse subjects comprehensible.

The three decades 1958–1988, filled with violence and change in all parts of the world, are in many dimensions faithfully recorded in these *Dædalus* volumes. Or, to put the matter more precisely, important segments of the thought of this period are represented here. Still, it must be said that certain themes have not figured nearly

as prominently in these years as they are likely to figure in the years immediately ahead. India and Japan, for example, have not been sufficiently treated; issues dealing with both are now planned. Also, because of conditions of censorship and intellectual control, it has not always been easy for *Dædalus* to publish on certain regions of the world. We have now planned an issue on Eastern Europe, and papers for it will be discussed in Oxford later this year. We also believe it possible to publish issues on China and the Soviet Union of a kind that could not have appeared in the 1960s or 1970s.

Given the very substantial contributions that *Dædalus* has made to the study of public policy issues—its thirty-year index, to be published soon, will attest to that—the Journal's commitment to new studies in these areas remains firm. The task will be not only to return to themes already treated in *Dædalus*—the city and the environment, to cite two examples—but to address wholly new issues, and to do so wherever possible on a global basis. The struggle against every kind of provincialism (what some would correctly call parochialism, national and professional) is one that greatly commends itself, particularly at this time in history.

As a new generation of scholars comes to the fore, taking the place of those who filled the expanding universities of the United States and Western Europe in the immediate postwar period, new emphases will emerge. If *Dædalus* has been active in emphasizing changes that have occurred in the many traditional disciplines, it must make an even larger commitment to describing the intellectual changes that are now in the offing. The recent *Dædalus* issue on artificial intelligence, reviewing the research of many decades, points the way to new volumes, already projected, that will deal with biotechnology, information theory, and the like.

This issue, "Three Decades of *Dædalus*," suggests something about the interests that have animated us in the last thirty years. These essays, different in most respects from those that appeared in the *Proceedings* fifty or a hundred years ago, are likely to be different again from those that will be published in *Dædalus* in the twenty-first century. These are offered as examples of mid- and late-twentieth-century scholarship; they suggest a range of interests and a quality of analysis and interpretation that are characteristic of this time.

Every major journal is to some extent a mirror of its age. It is to be hoped that this collection speaks well for the kinds of intellectual

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discourse that have been common in a world that has been both agitated and disordered. To say that contemporary scholarship may in another day be seen as one of the more attractive intellectual features of the twentieth century, an age not conspicuous for its civilized qualities, is to express a wish that an editor, looking over such a record, may legitimately ask readers to consider.

S.R.G.

Erik H. Erikson

Youth: Fidelity and Diversity

THE SUBJECT OF THIS PAPER IS A CERTAIN STRENGTH inherent in the age of youth. I call it the sense of and the capacity for Fidelity. To do justice to this theme, I would have to account for the strengths (I call them basic virtues, in the older sense of the word) arising in the stages of life which precede and follow youth. Only in this way could I hope to indicate the place of youth in the evolutionary scheme of the human life cycle, only in this way make plausible the fact that the virtue Fidelity could not develop earlier in life and must not, in the crises of youth, fail its time of ascendance. Obviously, however, such an accounting would demand more than space allows. I must refer the reader to a footnote,¹ which can do no more than list the virtues of which Fidelity is one, and point to publications offering a rationale of the evolutionary scheme from which they all emerge. We can take only a brief look at the stage of life which immediately precedes youth, the school age, and then turn to youth itself.

The school age, which intervenes between childhood and youth, finds the child, previously dominated by the experience of play, ready, willing, and able to apply himself to the rudimentary skills required, eventually wielding the tools and weapons, the symbols and concepts, of his culture. Also, it finds him eager to realize actual roles (previously playacted) which promise him an eventual identity within

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the specializations of his culture's technology. However, the stage-by-stage acquisition during individual childhood of each of man's evolutionary gains leaves the mark of infantile experience on his proudest achievements. The play age bequeaths to all methodical pursuits a quality of grandiose delusion; and the school age leaves man with a naïve acceptance of "what works."

As the child makes methods his own, he also permits accepted methods to make him their own. To consider as good only what works, and to feel accepted only if things work, to manage and to be managed, can become his dominant delight and value. And since technological specialization is an intrinsic part of the human horde's or tribe's or culture's system and world image, man's pride in the tools that work with materials and animals extends to the weapons which work against other humans as well as against other species. That this can awaken a cold cunning as well as an unmeasured ferocity rare in the animal world is, of course, due to a combination of developments. Among these we will be most concerned (because it comes to the fore during youth) with man's need to combine technological pride with a sense of identity: a double sense of personal self-sameness slowly accrued from infantile experiences and of shared sameness experienced in encounters with a widening part of the community.

This need too is an evolutionary necessity as yet to be understood and influenced by planning: for men—not being a natural species anymore, and not a mankind as yet—need to feel that they are of some special kind (tribe or nation, class or caste, family, occupation, or type), whose insignia they will wear with vanity and conviction, and defend (along with the economic claims they have staked out for their kind) against the foreign, the inimical, the not-so-human kinds. Thus it comes about that they can use all their proud skills and methods most systematically against other men, even in the most advanced state of rationality and civilization, with the conviction that they could not morally afford not to do so.

It is not our purpose, however, to dwell on the easy perversion and corruptibility of man's morality, but to determine what those core virtues are which—at this stage of psychosocial evolution—need our concerted attention and ethical support, for antimoralists as well as moralists easily overlook the bases in human nature for a strong ethics. As indicated, Fidelity is that virtue and quality of adolescent

ego strength which belongs to man's evolutionary heritage, but which—like all the basic virtues—can arise only in the interplay of a life stage with the individuals and the social forces of a true community.

The evidence in young lives of the search for something and somebody to be true to is seen in a variety of pursuits more or less sanctioned by society. It is often hidden in a bewildering combination of shifting devotion and sudden perversity, sometimes more devotedly perverse, sometimes more perversely devoted. Yet, in all youth's seeming shiftiness, a seeking after some durability in change can be detected, whether in the accuracy of scientific and technical method or in the sincerity of conviction, in the veracity of historical and fictional accounts or in the fairness of the rules of the game, in the authenticity of artistic production (and the high fidelity of reproduction) or in the genuineness of personalities and the reliability of commitments. This search is easily misunderstood, and often it is only dimly perceived by the individual himself, because youth, always set to grasp both diversity in principle and principle in diversity, must often test extremes before setting on a considered course. These extremes, particularly in times of ideological confusion and widespread marginality of identity, may include not only rebellious but also deviant, delinquent, and self-destructive tendencies. However, all this can be in the nature of a moratorium, a period of delay, in which to test the rock bottom of some truth before committing the powers of body and mind to a segment of the existing (or a coming) order. *Loyal* and *legal* have the same root, linguistically and psychologically, for legal commitment is an unsafe burden unless shouldered with a sense of sovereign choice and experienced as loyalty. To develop that sense is a joint task of the consistency of individual life history and the ethical potency of the historical process.

Let a great tragic play tell us something of the elemental nature of the crisis man encounters here. If it is a prince's crisis, let us not forget that the "leading families" of heaven and history at one time personified man's pride and tragic failure. Prince Hamlet is in his twenties—some say early, some late. We will say he is in the middle of his third decade, a youth no longer young and about to forfeit his moratorium. We find him in a tragic conflict in which he cannot make the one step demanded simultaneously by his age and his sex, his education and his historical responsibility.

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If we want to make Shakespeare's insight into one of "the ages of man" explicit, we know that, if undertaken by a trained psychologist, such an endeavor seems reprehensible to the students of drama. Everybody else (how could he do otherwise?) interprets Shakespeare in the light of some prevailing, if naïve, psychology. I will not try to solve the riddle of Hamlet's inscrutable nature, because his inscrutability is his nature. I feel sufficiently warned by Shakespeare himself, who lets Polonius speak like the caricature of a psychiatrist:

And I do think—or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure
as it has us'd to do—that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

Hamlet's decision to play insane is a secret which the audience shares with him from the start, without its ever getting rid of the feeling that he is on the verge of slipping into the state he pretends. "His madness," says T. S. Eliot, "is less than madness, and more than feigned."

If Hamlet's madness is more than feigned, it appears to be aggravated at least fivefold: by habitual melancholy, an introverted personality, Danishness, an acute state of mourning, and love. All this makes a regression to the Oedipus complex, postulated by Ernest Jones as the main theme of this as of other great tragedies, entirely plausible.² This would mean that Hamlet cannot forgive his mother's recent illegitimate betrayal, because he had not been able as a child to forgive her for having betrayed him quite legitimately with his father; but, at the same time, he is unable to avenge his father's recent murder, because as a child he had himself betrayed him in phantasy and wished him out of the way. Thus he forever postpones—until he ruins the innocent with the guilty—his uncle's execution, which alone would free the ghost of his beloved father from the fate of being,

doomed for a certain term to walk the night
and for the day confined to fast in fires.

No audience, however, can escape the feeling that he is a man of superior conscience, advanced beyond the legal concepts of his time, consumed by his own past and by that of his society.

One further suggestion is inescapable, that Hamlet displays some of the playwright's and the actor's personality: for where others lead

men and change the course of history, he reflectively moves characters about on the stage (the play within the play); in brief, where others act, he playacts. And indeed, Hamlet may well stand, historically speaking, for an abortive leader, a stillborn rebel.

We shall return to this in another context. In the meantime, all that has been stated can only support a biographic view which concentrates on Hamlet's age and status as a young intellectual of his time, for did he not recently return from studies at Wittenberg, the hotbed of humanist corruption, his time's counterpart to Sophist Athens (and today's existentialist centers of learning)?

There are five young men in the play, all Hamlet's age mates and all sure (or even overdefined) in their identities as dutiful sons, courtiers, and future leaders. But they are all drawn into the moral swamp of infidelity, which seeps into the fiber of all those who owe allegiance to "rotten" Denmark, drawn by the multiple intrigue which Hamlet hopes to defeat with his own intrigue: the play within the play.

Hamlet's world, then, is one of diffuse realities and fidelities. Only through the play within the play and through the madness within the insanity does Hamlet, the actor within the playactor, reveal the identity within the pretended identities—and the superior fidelity in the fatal pretense.

His estrangement is one of identity diffusion. His estrangement from existence itself is expressed in the famous soliloquy. He is estranged from being human and from being a man: "Man delights me not; no, nor woman either"; and estranged from love and procreation: "I say we will have no more marriage." He is estranged from the ways of his country, "though I am native here and to the manner born"; and much like our "alienated" youth, he is estranged from and describes as "alienated" the overstandardized man of his day, who "only got the tune of time and outward habit of encounter."

Yet Hamlet's single-minded and tragically doomed search for Fidelity breaks through all this. Here is the essence of the historical Hamlet, that ancient model who was a hero on the folk stage for centuries before Shakespeare modernized and eternalized him:

He was loth to be thought prone to lying about any matter, and wished to be held a stranger to any falsehood; and accordingly he mingled craft and

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candor in such a wise that, though his words did not lack truth, yet there was nothing to betoken the truth and to betray how far his keenness went.³

It accords with the general diffusion of truth in Hamlet that this central theme is announced in the old fool's message to his son:

Polonius: This above all: to thine own self be true
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

Yet it is also the central theme of Hamlet's most passionate pronouncements, which make his madness but an adjunct to his greatness. He abhors conventional sham, and advocates genuineness of feeling:

Seems, madam! Nay, it is; I know not "seems."
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected behavior of the visage,
Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief
That can denote me truly. These indeed seem,
For they are actions that a man might play;
But I have that within which passes show;
These but the trappings and suits of woe.

He searches for what only an elite will really understand—"honest method":

I heard thee speak me a speech once but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million. . . ! it was (as I received it, and others, whose judgments cried in the top of mine) an excellent play, well digested and in the scenes, set down with as much modesty and cunning. I remember one said there were no sallets in the lines to make the matter savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that might indict the author of affection; but called it an honest method.

He fanatically insists on purity of form and fidelity of reproduction:

. . . let your discretion be your tutor. Suit the action to the word, the word to the action, with this

special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty
of nature; for anything so overdone is from the purpose
of playing whose end, both at the first and now, was,
and is to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature,
to show virtue her own image and the very age and
body of time his own form and pressure.

And finally, the eager (and overeager) acknowledgment of genuine
character in his friend:

Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice
And could of men distinguish, her election
Hath sealed thee for herself; for thou hast been
As one in suffering all, that suffers nothing,
A man that fortune buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks; and bless'd are those
Whose blood and judgement are so co-mingled
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
That is nor passion's slave, and I will wear him
in my heart's core, ay in my heart of heart,
As I do thee. Something too much of this.

This, then, is the Hamlet within Hamlet. It fits the combined
playactor, the intellectual, the youth, and the neurotic that his words
are his better deeds, that he can say clearly what he cannot live, and
that his fidelity must bring doom to those he loves: for what he
accomplishes at the end is what he tried to avoid, even as he realizes
what we would call his negative identity in becoming exactly what his
own ethical sense could not tolerate: a mad revenger. Thus do inner
reality and historical actuality conspire to deny tragic man the
positive identity for which he seems exquisitely chosen. Of course, the
audience all along has sensed in Hamlet's very sincerity an element of
deadliness. At the end he gives his "dying voice" to his counterplayer
on the historical stage, victorious young Fortinbras, who in turn
insists on having him,

... born like a soldier to the stage
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have prov'd most royal.

The ceremonial fanfares, blaring and hollow, announce the end of
this singular youth. He is confirmed by his chosen peers, with the

royal insignia of his birth. A special person, intensely human, is buried—a member of his special kind.

To be a special kind, we have said, is an important element in the human need for personal and collective identities—all, in a sense, pseudospecies. They have found a transitory fulfillment in man's greatest moments of cultural identity and civilized perfection, and each such tradition of identity and perfection has highlighted what man could be, could he be all these at one time. The utopia of our own era predicts that man will be one species in one world, with a universal identity to replace the illusory superidentities which have divided him, and with an international ethics replacing all moral systems of superstition, repression, and suppression. Whatever the political arrangement that will further this utopia, we can only point to the schedule of human strengths which potentially emerge with the stages of life and indicate their interdependence on the structure of communal life. In youth, ego strength emerges from the mutual confirmation of individual and community, in the sense that society recognizes the young individual as a bearer of fresh energy and that the individual so confirmed recognizes society as a living process which inspires loyalty as it receives it, maintains allegiance as it attracts it, honors confidence as it demands it.

Let us go back, then, to the origins of that combination of drivenness and disciplined energy, of irrationality and courageous capability which belong to the best discussed and the most puzzling phenomena of the life cycle. The puzzle, we must grant throughout, is in the essence of the phenomenon. For the unity of the personality must be unique to be united, and the functioning of each new generation unpredictable to fulfill its function.

Of the three sources of new energy, physical growth is the most easily measured and systematically exercised, although its contribution to the aggressive drives is little understood. The youthful powers of comprehension and cognition can be experimentally studied and with planning applied to apprenticeship and study, but their relation to ideological imagination is less well known. Finally, the long-delayed genital maturation is a source of untold energy, but also of a drivenness accompanied by intrinsic frustration.

When maturing in his physical capacity for procreation, the human youth is as yet unable to love in that binding manner which only two

identities can offer each other, or to care consistently enough to sustain parenthood. The two sexes, of course, differ greatly in these respects, and so do individuals, while societies provide different opportunities and sanctions within which individuals must fend for their potentials—and for their potency. But what I have called a psychosocial moratorium, of some form and duration between the advent of genital maturity and the onset of responsible adulthood, seems to be built into the schedule of human development. Like all the moratoria in man's developmental schedules, the delay of adulthood can be prolonged and intensified to a forceful and a fateful degree; thus it accounts for very special human achievements and also for the very special weaknesses in such achievements. For, whatever the partial satisfactions and partial abstinences that characterize premarital sex life in various cultures—whether the pleasure and pride of forceful genital activity without commitment, or of erotic states without genital consummation, or of disciplined and devoted delay—ego development uses the psychosexual powers of adolescence for enhancing a sense of style and identity. Here, too, man is never an animal: even where a society furthers the genital closeness of the sexes, it does so in a stylized manner. On the other hand, the sex act, biologically speaking, is the procreative act, and there is an element of psychobiological dissatisfaction in any sexual situation not favorable in the long run to procreative consummation and care—a dissatisfaction which can be tolerated by otherwise healthy people, as all partial abstinences can be borne: for a certain period, under conditions otherwise favorable to the aims of identity formation. In the woman, no doubt, this dissatisfaction plays a much greater role, owing to her deeper engagement, physiologically and emotionally, in the sex act as the first step in a procreative commitment of which her monthly cycle is a regular bodily and emotive reminder.

The various hindrances to a full consummation of adolescent genital maturation have many deep consequences for man which pose an important problem for future planning. Best known is the regressive revival of that earlier stage of psychosexuality which preceded even the emotionally quiet first school years, that is, the infantile genital and locomotor stage, with its tendency toward autoerotic manipulation, grandiose phantasy, and vigorous play.⁴ But in youth, autoerotism, grandiosity, and playfulness are all

immensely amplified by genital potency and locomotor maturation, and are vastly complicated by what we will presently describe as the youthful mind's new historical perspective.

The most widespread expression of the discontented search of youth is the craving for locomotion, whether expressed in a general "being on the go," "tearing after something," or "running around," or in locomotion proper, as in vigorous work, in absorbing sports, in rapt dancing, in shiftless *Wanderschaft*, and in the employment and misuse of speedy animals and machines. But it also finds expression through participation in the movements of the day (whether the riots of a local commotion or the parades and campaigns of major ideological forces), if they only appeal to the need for feeling "moved" and for feeling essential in moving something along toward an open future. It is clear that societies offer any number of ritual combinations of ideological perspective and vigorous movement (dance, sports, parades, demonstrations, riots) to harness youth in the service of their historical aims, and that where societies fail to do so, these patterns will seek their own combinations, in small groups occupied with serious games, good-natured foolishness, cruel prankishness, and delinquent warfare. In no other stage of the life cycle, then, are the promise of finding oneself and the threat of losing oneself so closely allied.

In connection with locomotion, we must mention two great industrial developments—the motor engine and the motion picture. The motor engine, of course, is the very heart and symbol of our technology and its mastery, the aim and aspiration of much of modern youth. In connection with immature youth, however, it must be understood that both motorcar and motion pictures offer to those so inclined passive locomotion with an intoxicating delusion of being intensely active. The prevalence of car thefts and motor accidents among juveniles is much decried (although it is taking the public a long time to understand that a theft is an appropriation for the sake of gainful possession), while automobiles more often than not are stolen by the young in search of a kind of automotive intoxication, which may literally run away with car and youngster. Yet, while vastly inflating a sense of motor omnipotence, the need for active locomotion often remains unfulfilled. Motion pictures especially offer the onlooker, who sits, as it were, with the engine of his emotions racing, fast and furious motion in an artificially widened visual field,

interspersed with close-ups of violence and sexual possession—and all this without making the slightest demand on intelligence, imagination, or effort. I am pointing here to a widespread imbalance in adolescent experience, because I think it explains new kinds of adolescent outbursts and points to new necessities of mastery. The danger involved is greatly balanced in that part of youth which can take active charge of technical development, manages to learn, and to identify with the ingeniousness of invention, the improvement of production and the care of machinery, and is thus offered a new and unlimited application of youthful capacities. Where youth is underprivileged in such technical experience, it must explode in riotous motion; where it is ungifted, it will feel estranged from the modern world until technology and nontechnical intelligence have come to a certain convergence.

The cognitive gifts developing during the first half of the second decade add a powerful tool to the tasks of youth. J. Piaget calls the gains in cognition made toward the middle teens the achievement of “formal operations.”⁵ This means that the youth can now operate on hypothetical propositions, can think of possible variables and potential relations, and think of them in thought alone, independent of certain concrete checks previously necessary. As Jerome S. Bruner puts it, the child now can “conjure up systematically the full range of alternative possibilities that could exist at any given time.”⁶ Such cognitive orientation forms not a contrast but a complement to the need of the young person to develop a sense of identity, for, from among all possible and imaginable relations, he must make a series of ever-narrowing selections of personal, occupational, sexual, and ideological commitments.

Here again diversity and Fidelity are polarized: they make each other significant and keep each other alive. Fidelity without a sense of diversity can become an obsession and a bore; diversity without a sense of Fidelity, an empty relativism.

The sense of ego identity, then, becomes more necessary (and more problematical) wherever a wide range of possible identities is envisaged. *Identity* is a term used in our day with faddish ease; at this point, I can only indicate how very complicated the real article is.⁷ For ego identity is partially conscious and largely unconscious. It is a psychological process reflecting social processes; but with sociological means it can be seen as a social process reflecting psychological

processes; it meets its crisis in adolescence, but has grown throughout childhood and continues to reemerge in the crises of later years. The overriding meaning of it all, then, is the creation of a sense of sameness, a unity of personality now felt by the individual and recognized by others as having consistency in time—of being, as it were, an irreversible historical fact.

The prime danger of this age, therefore, is identity confusion, which can express itself in excessively prolonged moratoria (Hamlet offers an exalted example); in repeated impulsive attempts to end the moratorium with sudden choices, that is, to play with historical possibilities, and then to deny that some irreversible commitment has already taken place; and sometimes also in severe regressive pathology, which we will illustrate presently. The dominant issue of this, as of any other stage, therefore, is that of the active, the selective, ego being in charge and being enabled to be in charge by a social structure which grants a given age group the place it needs—and in which it is needed.

In a letter to Oliver Wendell Holmes, William James speaks of wanting to “rebaptize himself” in their friendship—and this one word says much of what is involved in the radical direction of the social awareness and the social needs of youth. From the middle of the second decade, the capacity to think and the power to imagine reach beyond the persons and personalities in which youth can immerse itself so deeply. Youth loves and hates in people what they “stand for” and chooses them for a significant encounter involving issues that often, indeed, are bigger than you and I. We have heard Hamlet’s declaration of love to his friend Horatio, a declaration quickly broken off—“something too much here.” It is a new reality, then, for which the individual wishes to be reborn, with and by those whom he chooses as his new ancestors and his genuine contemporaries.

This mutual selection, while frequently associated with, and therefore interpreted as a rebellion against or withdrawal from, the childhood environment, is an expression of a truly new perspective which I have already called historical—in one of those loose uses of an ancient and overspecialized word which sometimes become necessary in making new meanings specific. I mean by *historical perspective* something which every human being newly develops during adolescence. It is a sense of the irreversibility of significant events and an often urgent need to understand fully and quickly what

kind of happenings in reality and in thought determine others, and why. As we have seen, psychologists such as Piaget recognize in youth the capacity to appreciate that any process can be understood when it is retraced in its steps and thus reversed in thought. Yet it is no contradiction to say that he who comes to understand such a reversal also realizes that in reality, among all the events that can be thought of, a few will determine and narrow one another with historical fatality, whether (in the human instance) deservedly or undeservedly, intentionally or unintentionally.

Youth, therefore, is sensitive to any suggestion that it may be hopelessly determined by what went before in life histories or in history. Psychosocially speaking, this would mean that irreversible childhood identifications would deprive an individual of an identity of his own; historically, that invested powers should prevent a group from realizing its composite historical identity. For these reasons, youth often rejects parents and authorities and wishes to belittle them as inconsequential; it is in search of individuals and movements who claim, or seem to claim, that they can predict what is irreversible, thus getting ahead of the future—which means, reversing it. This in turn accounts for the acceptance by youth of mythologies and ideologies predicting the course of the universe or the historical trend; for even intelligent and practical youth can be glad to have the larger framework settled, so that it can devote itself to the details which it can manage, once it knows (or is convincingly told) what they stand for and where it stands. Thus, “true” ideologies are verified by history—for a time; for, if they can inspire youth, youth will make the predicted history come more than true.

By pointing to what, in the mind of youth, people “stand for,” I did not mean to overemphasize the ideological explicitness in the meaning of individuals to youth. The selection of meaningful individuals can take place in the framework of pointed practicalities such as schooling or job selection, as well as in religious and ideological fellowship, while the methods of selection can range from banal amenity and enmity to dangerous play with the borderlines of sanity and legality. But the occasions have in common a mutual sizing up and a mutual plea for being recognized as individuals who can be more than they seem to be and whose potentials are needed by the order that is or will be. The representatives of the adult world thus involved may be advocates and practitioners of technical accuracy, of

a method of scientific inquiry, of a convincing rendition of truth, of a code of fairness, of a standard of artistic veracity, or of a way of personal genuineness. They become representatives of an elite in the eyes of the young, quite independently of whether or not they are also viewed thus in the eyes of the family, the public, or the police. The choice can be dangerous, but to some youths the danger is a necessary ingredient of the experiment. Elemental things are dangerous; and if youth could not overcommit itself to danger, it could not commit itself to the survival of genuine values—one of the primary steering mechanisms of psychosocial evolution. The elemental fact is that only when Fidelity has found its field of manifestation is the human as good as, say, the nestling in nature, which is ready to rely on its own wings and to take its adult place in the ecological order.

If in human adolescence this field of manifestation is alternately one of devoted conformism and of extreme deviancy, of rededication and of rebellion, we must remember the necessity for man to react (and to react most intensively in his youth) to the diversity of conditions. In the setting of psychosocial evolution, we can ascribe a long-range meaning to the idiosyncratic individualist and to the rebel as well as to the conformist, albeit under different historical conditions. For healthy individualism and devoted deviancy contain an indignation in the service of a wholeness that is to be restored, without which psychosocial evolution would be doomed. Thus, human adaptation has its loyal deviants, its rebels, who refuse to adjust to what so often is called, with an apologetic and fatalistic misuse of a once good phrase, the human condition.

Loyal deviancy and identity formation in extraordinary individuals are often associated with neurotic and psychotic symptoms, or at least with a prolonged moratorium of relative isolation, in which all the estrangements of adolescence are suffered. In *Young Man Luther* I have attempted to put the suffering of a great young man into the context of his greatness and his historic position.⁸

It is not our purpose, however, to discuss what to many youths is the most urgent question, and yet to us the most difficult to answer, namely, the relation of special giftedness and neurosis; rather, we must characterize the specific nature of adolescent psychopathology, or, even more narrowly, indicate the relevance of the issue of fidelity to the psychopathology of youth.

In the classical case of this age group, Freud's first published encounter with an eighteen-year-old girl suffering from "*petite hystérie* with the commonest of all . . . symptoms," it is interesting to recall that at the end of treatment Freud was puzzled about "what kind of help" the girl wanted from him. He had communicated to her his interpretation of the structure of her neurotic disorder, an interpretation which became the central theme of his classical publication on the psychosexual factors in the development of hysteria.⁹ Freud's clinical reports, however, remain astonishingly fresh over the decades, and today his case history clearly reveals the psychosocial centering of the girl's story in matters of fidelity. In fact, one might say, without seriously overdoing it, that three words characterize her social history: sexual infidelity on the part of some of the most important adults in her life; the perfidy of her father's denial of his friend's sexual acts, which were in fact the precipitating cause of the girl's illness; and a strange tendency on the part of all the adults around the girl to make her a confidante in any number of matters, without having enough confidence in her to acknowledge the truths relevant to her illness.

Freud, of course, focused on other matters, opening up, with the concentration of a psychosurgeon, the symbolic meaning of her symptoms and their history; but, as always, he reported relevant data on the periphery of his interests. Thus, among the matters which somewhat puzzled him, he reports that the patient was "almost beside herself at the idea of its being supposed that she had merely fancied" the conditions which had made her sick and that she was kept "anxiously trying to make sure whether I was being quite straightforward with her"—or perfidious like her father. When at the end she left analyst and analysis "in order to confront the adults around her with the secrets she knew," Freud considered this an act of revenge on them, and on him; and within the outlines of his interpretation, this partial interpretation stands. Nevertheless, as we can now see, there was more to this insistence on the historical truth than the denial of an inner truth—and this especially in an adolescent. For, the question as to what confirms them irreversibly as a truthful or a cheating, a sick or a rebellious type is paramount in the minds of adolescents; and the further question, whether or not they were right in not accepting the conditions which made them sick, is as important to them as the insight into the structure of their sickness can ever be.

In other words, they insist that the meaning of their sickness finds recognition within a reformulation of the historical truth as revealed in their own insights and distortions, and not according to the terms of the environment which wishes them to be "brought to reason" (as Dora's father had put it when he brought her to Freud).

No doubt, Dora by then was a hysteric, and the meaning of her symptoms was psychosexual; but the sexual nature of her disturbance and of the precipitating events should not blind us to the fact that other perfidies, familial and communal, cause adolescents to regress in a variety of ways to a variety of earlier stages.

Only when adolescence is reached does the capacity for such clear regression and symptom formation occur: only when the historical function of the mind is consolidated can significant repressions become marked enough to cause consistent symptom formation and deformation of character. The depth of regression determines the nature of the pathology and points to the therapy to be employed. However, there is a pathognomonic picture which all sick youth have in common and which is clearly discernible in Freud's description of Dora's total state. This picture is characterized first of all by a denial of the historical flux of time, and by an attempt to challenge retrospectively, while retesting in the present all parental premises before new trust is invested in the (emancipated) future.

The sick adolescent thus gradually stops extending experimental feelers toward the future; his moratorium of illness becomes an end in itself and thus ceases to be a moratorium (Dora suffered from a "*taedium vitae* which was probably not entirely genuine," Freud wrote). It is for this reason that death and suicide can be at this time such a spurious preoccupation—one leading unpredictably to suicide (and to murder)—for death would conclude the life history before it joins others in inexorable commitment (Dora's parents found "a letter in which she took leave of them because she could no longer endure life. Her father . . . guessed that the girl had no serious suicidal intentions"). There is also a social isolation which excludes all sense of solidarity and can lead to a snobbish isolation which finds companions but no friends (Dora "tried to avoid social intercourse," was "distant" and "unfriendly"). The energy of repudiation which accompanies the first steps of an identity formation (and in some youngsters can lead to the sudden impulse to annihilate) is in

neurotics turned against the self ("Dora was satisfied neither with herself nor with her family").

A repudiated self in turn cannot offer loyalty, and, of course, fears the fusion of love or of sexual encounters. The work inhibition often connected with this picture (Dora suffered from "fatigue and lack of concentration") is really a career inhibition, in the sense that every exertion of skill or method is suspected of binding the individual to the role and the status suggested by the activity; thus, again, any moratorium is spoiled. Where fragmentary identities are formed, they are highly self-conscious and are immediately put to a test (thus Dora obviously defeated her wish to be a woman intellectual). This identity consciousness is a strange mixture of superiority, almost a megalomania ("I am a majority of one," one of my patients said), with which the patient tries to convince himself that he is really too good for his community or his period of history, while he is equally convinced of being nobody.

We have sketched the most obvious social symptoms of adolescent psychopathology, in part to indicate that, besides the complicated structure of specific symptoms, there is in the picture presented of each stage an expression of the dominant psychosocial issue, so open that one sometimes wonders whether the patient lies by telling the simple truth or tells the truth when he seems most obviously to lie.

The sketch presented, however, also serves as a comparison of the isolated adolescent sufferer with those youths who try to solve their doubt in their elders by joining deviant cliques and gangs. Freud found that "psychoneuroses are, so to speak, the negative of perversions,"¹⁰ which means that neurotics suffer under the repression of tendencies which perverts try to "live out." This has a counterpart in the fact that isolated sufferers try to solve by withdrawal what the joiners of deviant cliques and gangs attempt to solve by conspiracy.

If we now turn to this form of adolescent pathology, the denial of the irreversibility of historical time appears to be expressed in a clique's or a gang's delusion of being an organization with a tradition and an ethics all its own. The pseudohistorical character of such societies is expressed in such names as "The Navahos," "The Saints," or "The Edwardians," while their provocation is countered by society (remember the Pachucos of the war years) with a mixture of impotent rage wherever murderous excess does actually occur, and with a phobic overconcern followed by vicious suppression wherever these

"secret societies" are really no more than fads lacking any organized purpose. Their pseudosocietal character reveals itself in their social parasitism, and their pseudorebellion in the conformism actually governing their habits. Yet the seemingly unassailable inner sense of callous rightness is no doubt due to an inner realignment of motivations, which can best be understood by briefly comparing the torment of the isolated youngster with the temporary gains derived by the joiner from the mere fact that he has been taken into a pseudosociety. The time diffusion attending the isolate's inability to envisage a career is "cured" by his attention to "jobs"—theft, destruction, fights, murder, or acts of perversion or addiction, conceived on the spur of the moment and executed forthwith. This "job" orientation also takes care of the work inhibition, because the clique and the gang are always "busy," even if they just "hang around." Their lack of any readiness to wince under shaming or accusation is often considered the mark of a total personal perdition, while in fact it is a trademark, an insignia of the "species" to which the youngster (mostly marginal in economic and ethnic respects) would rather belong than to a society which is eager to confirm him as a criminal and then promises to rehabilitate him as an ex-criminal.

As to the isolate's tortured feelings of bisexuality or of an immature need for love, the young joiner in social pathology, by joining, has made a clear decision: he is male with a vengeance, she a female without sentimentality; or they are both perverts. In either case, they can eliminate the procreative function of genitality altogether and can make a pseudoculture of what is left. By the same token, they will acknowledge authority only in the form chosen in the act of joining, repudiating the rest of the social world, where the isolate repudiates existence as such and, with it, himself.

The importance of these comparative considerations, which have been stated in greater detail elsewhere, lie in the impotent craving of the isolated sufferer to be true to himself, and in that of the joiner, to be true to a group and to its insignia and codes. By this I do not mean to deny that the one is sick (as his physical and mental symptoms attest), nor that the other can be on the way to becoming a criminal, as his more and more irreversible acts and choices attest. Both theory and therapy, however, lack the proper leverage, if the need for (receiving and giving) fidelity is not understood, and especially if

instead the young deviant is confirmed by every act of the correctional or therapeutic authorities as a future criminal or a lifelong patient.

In Dora's case, I have tried to indicate the phenomenology of this need. As to young delinquents, I can only quote again one of those rare newspaper reports which convey enough of a story to show the elements involved. Kai T. Erikson and I have used this example as an introduction to our article "The Confirmation of the Delinquent."¹¹

JUDGE IMPOSES ROAD GANG TERM FOR BACK TALK

Wilmington, N. D. (UP)—A "smart alecky" youth who wore pegged trousers and a flattop haircut began six months on a road gang today for talking back to the wrong judge.

Michael A. Jones, 20, of Wilmington, was fined \$25 and costs in Judge Edwin Jay Roberts Jr.'s superior court for reckless operation of an automobile. But he just didn't leave well enough alone.

"I understand how it was, with your pegged trousers and flattop haircut," Roberts said in assessing the fine. "You go on like this and I predict in five years you'll be in prison."

When Jones walked over to pay his fine, he overheard Probation Officer Gideon Smith tell the judge how much trouble the "smart alecky" young offender had been.

"I just want you to know I'm not a thief," interrupted Jones to the judge.

The judge's voice boomed to the court clerk: "Change that judgment to six months on the roads."

I quote the story here to add the interpretation that the judge in this case (neither judge nor case differs from a host of others) took it as an affront to the dignity of authority what may have also been a desperate "historical" denial, an attempt to claim that a truly antisocial identity had not yet been formed, and that there was enough discrimination and potential fidelity left to be made something of by somebody who cared to do so. But instead, what the young man and the judge made of it was likely, of course, to seal the irreversibility and confirm the doom. I say "was likely to" because I do not know what happened in this case; we do know, however, the high recidivism of criminality in the young who, during the years of identity formation, are forced by society into intimate contact with criminals.

Finally, it cannot be overlooked that at times political undergrounds of all kinds can and do make use of the need for fidelity as well as the store of wrath in those deprived in their need by their families or their societies. Here social rejuvenation can make use of and redeem social pathology, even as in individuals special giftedness can be related to and redeem neurosis. These are matters too weighty to be discussed briefly and, at any rate, our concern has been with the fact that the psychopathology of youth suggests a consideration of the same issues which we found operative in the evolutionary and developmental aspects of this stage of life.

To summarize: Fidelity, when fully matured, is the strength of disciplined devotion. It is gained in the involvement of youth in such experiences as reveal the essence of the era they are to join as the beneficiaries of its tradition, as the practitioners and innovators of its technology, as renewers of its ethical strength, as rebels bent on the destruction of the outlived, and as deviants with deviant commitments. This, at least, is the potential of youth in psychosocial evolution; and while this may sound like a rationalization endorsing any high-sounding self-delusion in youth, any self-indulgence masquerading as devotion, or any righteous excuse for blind destruction, it makes intelligible the tremendous waste attending this as any other mechanism of human adaptation, especially if its excesses meet with more moral condemnation than ethical guidance. On the other hand, our understanding of these processes is not furthered by the "clinical" reduction of adolescent phenomena to their infantile antecedents and to an underlying dichotomy of drive and conscience. Adolescent development comprises a new set of identification processes, both with significant persons and with ideological forces, which give importance to individual life by relating it to a living community and to ongoing history, and by counterpointing the newly won individual identity with some communal solidarity.

In youth, then, the life history intersects with history: here individuals are confirmed in their identities, societies regenerated in their life-style. This process also implies a fateful survival of adolescent modes of thinking in man's historical and ideological perspectives.

Historical processes, of course, have already entered the individual's core in childhood. Both ideal and evil images and the moral prototypes guiding parental administrations originate in the past

struggles of contending cultural and national "species," which also color fairy-tale and family lore, superstition and gossip, and the simple lessons of early verbal training. Historians on the whole make little of this; they describe the visible emergence and the contest of autonomous historical ideas, unconcerned with the fact that these ideas reach down into the lives of generations and reemerge through the daily awakening and training of historical consciousness in young individuals.

It is youth, then, which begins to develop that sense of historical irreversibility which can lead to what we may call acute historical estrangement. This lies behind the fervent quest for a sure meaning in individual life history and in collective history, and behind the questioning of the laws of relevancy which bind datum and principle, event and movement. But it is also, alas, behind the bland carelessness of that youth which denies its own vital need to develop and cultivate a historical consciousness—and conscience.

To enter history, each generation of youth must find an identity consonant with its own childhood and consonant with an ideological promise in the perceptible historical process. But in youth the tables of childhood dependence begin slowly to turn: no longer is it merely for the old to teach the young the meaning of life, whether individual or collective. It is the young who, by their responses and actions, tell the old whether life as represented by the old and as presented to the young has meaning; and it is the young who carry in them the power to confirm those who confirm them and, joining the issues, to renew and to regenerate, or to reform and to rebel.

I will not at this point review the institutions which participate in creating the retrospective and the prospective mythology offering historical orientation to youth: obviously, the mythmakers of religion and politics, the arts and the sciences, the stage and fiction—all contribute to the historical logic preached to youth more or less consciously, more or less responsibly. And today we must add, at least in the United States, psychiatry; and all over the world, the press, which forces the leaders to make history in the open and to accept reportorial distortion as a major historical factor.

I have spoken of Hamlet as an abortive ideological leader. His drama combines all the elements of which successful ideological leaders are made: they are the postadolescents who make out of the

very contradictions of adolescence the polarities of their charisma. Individuals with an uncommon depth of conflict, they also have uncanny gifts, and often uncanny luck with which they offer to the crisis of a generation the solution of their own crisis—always, as Woodrow Wilson put it, being “in love with activity on a large scale,” always feeling that their one life must be made to count in the lives of all, always convinced that what they felt as adolescents was a curse, a fall, an earthquake, a thunderbolt, in short, a revelation to be shared with their generation and with many to come. Their humble claim to being chosen does not preclude a wish for universal power. “Fifty years from now,” wrote Kierkegaard in the journal of his spiritual soliloquy, “the whole world will read my diary.” He sensed, no doubt, that the impending dominance of mass ideologies would bring to the fore his cure for the individual soul, existentialism. We must study the question (I have approached it in my study of young Luther) of what ideological leaders do to history—whether they first aspire to power and then face spiritual qualms, or first face spiritual perdition and then seek universal influence. Their answers often manage to subsume under the heading of a more embracing identity all that ails man, especially young man, at critical times: danger from new weapons and from natural forces aggravated by man’s misuse of nature; anxiety from sources within the life history typical for the time; and existential dread of the ego’s limitations, magnified in times of disintegrating superidentities and intensified in adolescence.

But does it not take a special and, come to think of it, a strange sense of calling, to dare and to care to give such intrusive answers? Is it not probable and in fact demonstrable that among the most passionate ideologists there are unreconstructed adolescents, transmitting to their ideas the proud moment of their transient ego recovery, of their temporary victory over the forces of existence and history, but also the pathology of their deepest isolation, the defensiveness of their forever adollescening egos—and their fear of the calm of adulthood? “To live beyond forty,” says Dostoevsky’s underground diarist, “is bad taste.” It warrants study, both historical and psychological, to see how some of the most influential leaders have turned away from parenthood, only to despair in middle age of the issue of their leadership as well.

It is clear that today the ideological needs of all but intellectual youth of the humanist tradition are beginning to be taken care of by

a subordination of ideology to technology: what works, on the grandest scale, is good. It is to be hoped that the worst implications of this trend have outlived themselves already in fascism. Yet, in the technological superidentity, the American dream and the Marxist revolution also meet. If their competition can be halted before mutual annihilation, it is just possible that a new mankind, seeing that it can now build and destroy anything it wishes, will focus its intelligence (feminine as well as masculine) on the ethical question concerning the workings of human generations—beyond products, powers, and ideas. Ideologies in the past have contained an ethical corrective, but ethics must eventually transcend ideology as well as technology: the great question will be, and already is, what man, on ethical grounds and without moralistic self-destruction, must decide *not* to do, even though he could make it work—for a while.

Moralities sooner or later outlive themselves, ethics never: this is what the need for identity and for fidelity, reborn with each generation, seems to point to. Morality in the moralistic sense can be shown by modern means of inquiry to be predicated on superstitions and irrational inner mechanisms which ever again undermine the ethical fiber of generations; but morality is expendable only where ethics prevail. This is the wisdom that the words of many languages have tried to tell man. He has tenaciously clung to the words, even though he has understood them only vaguely, and in his actions has disregarded or perverted them completely. But there is much in ancient wisdom which can now become knowledge.

As in the near future peoples of different tribal and national pasts join what must become the identity of one mankind, they can find an initial common language only in the workings of science and technology. This in turn may well help them to make transparent the superstitions of their traditional moralities and may even permit them to advance rapidly through a historical period during which they must put a vain superidentity of neonationalism in the place of their much-exploited historical identity weakness. But they must also look beyond the major ideologies of the now “established” world, offered them as ceremonial masks to frighten and to attract them. The overriding issue is the creation not of a new ideology but of a universal ethics growing out of a universal technological civilization. This can be advanced only by men and women who are neither ideological youths nor moralistic old men, but who know that from

generation to generation the test of what you produce is in the *care* it inspires. If there is any chance at all, it is in a world more challenging, more workable, and more venerable than all myths, retrospective or prospective: it is in historical reality, at last ethically cared for.

ENDNOTES

- ¹*Virtue* once connoted "inherent strength" and "active quality." In this sense, I consider the following basic virtues (essential to, if not identical with, ego strength) to be anchored in the successive stages of life: Hope, in infancy; Will and Purpose, in the play age; Skill, in the school age; Fidelity, in youth; Love, in young adulthood; Care, in adulthood; Wisdom, in old age. For an evolutionary and genetic rationale of this concept of the life cycle, see the writer's "The Roots of Virtue," in *The Humanist Frame*, ed. Sir Julian Huxley (London: Allen and Unwin, 1961; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1961). For a more detailed exposition, see the writer's book, *Life Cycle and Community*, in which the other stages of development are treated in chapters analogous to the one presented here.
- ²Ernest Jones, *Hamlet and Oedipus* (New York: Doubleday, Anchor, 1949).
- ³Saxo Grammaticus, *Danish History*, trans. Elton, 1894 (quoted in Jones), 163–64.
- ⁴The classical psychoanalytic works concerned with psychosexuality and the ego defenses of youth are Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, standard ed., vol. 7 (London: The Hogarth Press, 1953); and Anna Freud, *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defense* (New York: International Universities Press, 1946). For the writer's views, see his *Childhood and Society* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1950).
- ⁵B. Inhelder and J. Piaget, *The Growth of Logical Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence* (New York: Basic Books, 1958).
- ⁶Jerome S. Bruner, *The Process of Education* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960).
- ⁷See the writer's "The Problem of Ego-Identity" in *Identity and the Life Cycle: Psychological Issues*, vol. 1, no. 1 (New York: International Universities Press, 1959).
- ⁸*Young Man Luther* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1958; London: Faber and Faber, 1959).
- ⁹Sigmund Freud, *Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria*, standard ed., vol. 7 (London: The Hogarth Press, 1953).
- ¹⁰*Ibid.*, 50.
- ¹¹Erik H. Erikson and Kai T. Erickson, "The Confirmation of the Delinquent," *The Chicago Review* 10 (Winter 1957):15–23.

Alice S. Rossi

Equality between the Sexes: An Immodest Proposal

... the principle which regulates the existing relations between the two sexes ... is wrong in itself and [is] now the chief hindrance to human improvement; and ... it ought to be replaced by a principle of perfect equality, admitting no power or privilege on the one side, nor disability on the other. —John Stuart Mill (1869)

WHEN JOHN STUART MILL WROTE HIS ESSAY “The Subjection of Women” in 1869, the two major things he argued for with elegance and persuasion were to extend the franchise to women and to end the legal subordination of married women to their husbands. The movement for sex equality had already gathered considerable momentum in England and the United States by 1869, reaching its peak fifty years later, when the franchise was won by American women in 1920. In the decades since 1920, this momentum has gradually slackened, until by the 1960s American society has been losing rather than gaining ground in the growth toward sex equality. American women are not trying to extend their claim to equality from the political to the occupational and social arenas and often do not even seem interested in exercising the rights

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so bitterly won in the early decades of the twentieth century in politics and higher education. The constitutional amendment on equal rights for men and women has failed to pass Congress for seventeen consecutive years, and today a smaller proportion of college graduates are women than was true thirty years ago.

There is no overt antifeminism in our society in 1964, not because sex equality has been achieved, but because there is practically no feminist spark left among American women. When I ask the brightest of my women college students about their future study and work plans, they either have none because they are getting married in a few months, or they show clearly that they have lowered their aspirations from professional and research fields that excited them as freshmen, to concentrate as juniors on more practical fields far below their abilities. Young women seem increasingly uncommitted to anything beyond early marriage, motherhood, and a suburban house. There are few Noras in contemporary American society because women have deluded themselves that the doll's house is large enough to find complete personal fulfillment within it.

It will be the major thesis of this essay that we need to reassert the claim to sex equality and to search for the means by which it can be achieved. By *sex equality* I mean a socially androgynous conception of the roles of men and women, in which they are equal and similar in such spheres as intellectual, artistic, political, and occupational interests and participation, complementary only in those spheres dictated by physiological differences between the sexes. This assumes the traditional conceptions of masculine and feminine are inappropriate to the kind of world we can live in in the second half of the twentieth century. An androgynous conception of sex role means that each sex will cultivate some of the characteristics usually associated with the other in traditional sex role definitions. This means that tenderness and expressiveness should be cultivated in boys and socially approved in men, so that a male of any age in our society would be psychologically and socially free to express these qualities in his social relationships. It means that achievement need, workmanship, and constructive aggression should be cultivated in girls and approved in women so that a female of any age would be similarly free to express these qualities in her social relationships. This is one of the points of contrast with the feminist goal of an earlier day: rather than a one-sided plea for women to adapt a masculine stance in the

world, this definition of sex equality stresses the enlargement of the common ground on which men and women base their lives together by changing the social definitions of approved characteristics and behavior for both sexes.

It will be an assumption of this essay that by far the majority of the differences between the sexes which have been noted in social research are socially rather than physiologically determined. What proportion of these sex differences are physiologically based and what proportion are socially based is a question the social and physiological sciences cannot really answer at the present time. It is sufficient for my present purposes to note that the opportunities for social change toward a closer approximation of equality between the sexes are large enough within the area of sex differences now considered to be socially determined to constitute a challenging arena for thought and social action. This is my starting point. I shall leave to speculative discourse and future physiological research the question of what constitutes irreducible differences between the sexes.

There are three main questions I shall raise in this essay. Why was the momentum of the earlier feminist movement lost? Why should American society attempt to reach a state of sex equality as I have defined it above? What are the means by which equality between the sexes can be achieved?

WHY FEMINISM DECLINED

I shall discuss three factors which have been major contributors to the waning of feminism. The chief goals of the early leaders of the feminist movement were to secure the vote for women and to change the laws affecting marriage so that women would have equal rights to property and to their own children. As in any social reform movement or social revolution, the focus in the first stage is on change in the legal code, whether this is to declare independence from a mother country, establish a constitution for a new nation, free the slaves, or secure the right of women to be equal citizens with men. But the social changes required to translate such law into the social fabric of a society are of a quite different order. Law by itself cannot achieve this goal. It is one thing to declare slaves free or to espouse a belief in racial equality; quite another matter to accept racial integration in all spheres of life, as many northern communities have learned in recent

years. In a similar way, many people accept the legal changes which have reduced the inequality between men and women and espouse belief in sex equality, but resist its manifestation in their personal life. If a social movement rests content with legal changes without making as strong an effort to change the social institutions through which they are expressed, it will remain a hollow victory.

This is one of the things which occurred in the case of the feminist movement. Important as the franchise is, or the recent change in Civil Service regulations which prevents the personnel specification of "male only," the new law or regulation can be successful only to the extent that women exercise the franchise, or are trained to be qualified for and to aspire to the jobs they are now permitted to hold. There is no sex equality until women participate on an equal basis with men in politics, occupations, and the family. Law and administrative regulations must permit such participation, but women must want to participate and be able to participate. In politics and the occupational world, to be able to participate depends primarily on whether home responsibilities can be managed simultaneously with work or political commitments. Since women have had, and probably will continue to have, primary responsibility for child rearing, their participation in politics, professions, or the arts cannot be equal to that of men unless ways are devised to ease the combination of home and work responsibilities. This is precisely what has not occurred; at the same time, since fewer women today choose a career over marriage, the result has been a reduction in women's representation in the more challenging and demanding occupations.

By itself, the stress on legal change to the neglect of institutional change in the accommodations between family and work does not go very far in explaining why the feminist movement has lost momentum. There is an important second factor which must be viewed in conjunction with this first one. The feminist movement has always been strongest when it was allied with other social reform movements. In the nineteenth century its linkage was with the antislavery movement, and in the early twentieth century it was allied with the social welfare movement. There is an interesting and a simple explanation of this: unlike any other type of social inequality, whether of race, class, religion, or nationality, sex is the only instance in which representatives of the unequal groups live in more intimate association with each other than with members of their own group.

A woman is more intimately associated with a man than she is with any woman.* This has not been the case for lord-serf, master-slave, Protestant–Roman Catholic, white-Negro relationships unless or until the social groups involved reach a full equality. By linking the feminist cause to the antislavery or social welfare movement, women were able to work together with men of similar sympathies, and in the process they enlisted the support of these men for the feminist cause. To a greater extent than any other underprivileged group, women need not only vigorous spokesmen and pacesetters of their own sex, but the support of men, to effect any major change in the status of women, whether in the personal sphere of individual relationships or on the level of social organization.[†] The decline of political radicalism and the general state of affluence and social conservatism in American society since World War II have contributed in subtle ways to the decline of feminism, for women are not joined with men in any movement affecting an underprivileged group in American society. At the present time, marriage remains the only major path of social mobility for women in our society.

The general conservatism of the total society has also penetrated the academic disciplines, with side effects on the motivation and ability of women to exercise the rights already theirs or to press for an extension of them. Feminism has been undermined by the conservatism of psychology and sociology in the postwar period. Sociologists studying the family have borrowed heavily from selective findings in social anthropology and from psychoanalytic theory and have pronounced sex to be a universally necessary basis for role differentiation in the family. By extension, in the larger society women are seen as predominantly fulfilling nurturant, expressive functions and men the instrumental, active functions. When this

*This is one among many points of crucial and still relevant significance to be found in John Stuart Mill's essay "The Subjection of Women" (London, 1869).

[†]In recent years of acute manpower shortages in scientific, professional, and technical fields, there has been a growing awareness of the fact that women constitute the only sizable remaining reservoir of such talent. Many men whose administrative or policy responsibilities alert them to this fact have been eagerly exploring the ways by which female brainpower could be added to the national pool of skilled manpower. The contemporary period is therefore ripe with opportunities for talented women, and women can anticipate a welcome from male colleagues and employers. I shall not discuss any further the current societal need for women in the labor force, because I would argue for an extension of female participation in the higher levels of occupations even in an era with no pressing manpower shortages, on the grounds of the more general principles to be developed in this essay.

viewpoint is applied to American society, intellectually aggressive women or tender expressive men are seen as deviants showing signs of "role conflict," "role confusion," or neurotic disturbance. They are not seen as a promising indication of a desirable departure from traditional sex role definitions.* In a similar way, the female sphere, the family, is viewed by social theorists as a passive, pawnlike institution, adapting to the requirements of the occupational, political, or cultural segments of the social structure, seldom playing an active role either in affecting the nature of other social institutions or determining the nature of social change.† The implicit assumption in problem after problem in sociology is that radical social innovations are risky and may have so many unintended consequences as to make it unwise to propose or support them. Although the sociologist describes and analyzes social change, it is change already accomplished, seldom anticipated purposive social change.‡ When the changes are in process, they are defined as social problems, seldom as social opportunities.

Closely linked to this trend in sociology and social anthropology, and in fact partly attributable to it, is the pervasive permeation of psychoanalytic thinking throughout American society. Individual

*Often the conclusion that sex differentiation is a basic and universal phenomenon is buttressed by pointing to a large number of societies, all of which manifest such sex differentiation. Since Americans are easily impressed by large numbers, this does indeed sound like conclusive evidence against the likelihood of any society's achieving full sex equality. Closer examination of such samples, however, reveals two things: very little representation of numerous African societies in which the instrumental-expressive distinction is simply *not* linked to sex in the predicted direction, and second, they are largely primitive societies, a half dozen of which might equal the size of a very small American city. Such cultural comparisons assume every possible kind of societal arrangement is represented, but this is not the case: Sweden, China, Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union, Israel are not represented on such a continuum. I believe we may learn more that is of relevance to a future America by studying family patterns in these societies than from a study of all the primitive societies in the world. Unfortunately, most of contemporary sociology and social anthropology is far less concerned with the future than the present as molded by the past.

†A rare exception is the recent work by William J. Goode, who has focused precisely on the active role of the family in determining the course of social change in the nonfamily segments of social structure. See his *World Revolution and Family Patterns* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1963).

‡When the sociologist finds, for example, that the incidence of divorce is higher for those who marry outside their religion than for those who do not, he concludes that intermarriage is "bad" or "risky"; he does not say such marital failures may reflect the relative newness of the social pattern of intermarriage, much less suggest that such failures may decline once this pattern is more prevalent. In fact, the only aspect of intermarriage which is studied is the incidence of its failure. Sociologists have not studied *successful* intermarriages.

psychoanalysts vary widely among themselves, but when their theories are popularized by social scientists, marriage and family counselors, writers, social critics, pediatricians, and mental health specialists, there emerges a common and conservative image of the woman's role. It is the traditional image of woman which is popularized: the woman who finds complete self-fulfillment in her exclusive devotion to marriage and parenthood. Women who thirty years ago might have chosen a career over a marriage, or restricted their family size to facilitate the combination of family and work roles, have been persuaded to believe that such choices reflect their inadequacy as women. It is this sense of failure as a woman that lies behind the defensive and apologetic note of many older unmarried professional women, the guilt which troubles the working mother (which I suspect goes up in direct proportion to the degree to which she is familiar with psychoanalytic ideas), the restriction of the level of aspiration of college women, the early plunge into marriage, the closed door of the doll's house.

Our society has been so inundated with psychoanalytic thinking that any dissatisfaction or conflict in personal and family life is considered to require solution on an individual basis. This goes well with the general American value stress on individualism, and American women have increasingly resorted to psychotherapy, the most highly individualized solution of all, for the answers to the problems they have as women. In the process the idea has been lost that many problems, even in the personal family sphere, cannot be solved on an individual basis, but require solution on a societal level by changing the institutional contexts within which we live.

The consequences of this acceptance of psychoanalytic ideas and conservatism in the social sciences have been twofold: first, the social sciences in the United States have contributed very little since the 1930s to any lively intellectual dialogue on sex equality as a goal or the ways of implementing that goal. Second, they have provided a quasi-scientific underpinning to educators, marriage counselors, mass media and advertising researchers, who together have partly created, and certainly reinforced, the withdrawal of millions of young Amer-

ican women from the mainstream of thought and work in our society.*

WHY SEEK EQUALITY BETWEEN THE SEXES

This brings us to the second question: why should American society attempt to reach a state of sex equality? If women seem satisfied with a more narrowly restricted life pattern than men would be, why should we seek to disturb this pattern? To begin with, I do not think this question is really relevant to the issue. There have been underprivileged groups throughout history which contained sizable proportions of contented, uncomplaining members, whether slaves, serfs, or a low-status caste. But the most enlightened members of both the privileged and the underprivileged groups in such societies came to see that inequality not only depressed the human potential of the subject groups but corrupted those in the superordinate groups. The lives of southern whites are as crippled by racial inequality as the lives of southern Negroes are impoverished. In the same way, many men spend their daytime hours away from home as vital cognitive animals and their nights and weekends in mental passivity and vegetation. Social and personal life is impoverished for some part of many men's lives because so many of their wives live in a perpetual state of intellectual and social impoverishment.

A second reason why American society should attempt to reach a state of full sex equality is that at the level our industrial society has now reached, it is no longer necessary for women to confine their life expectations to marriage and parenthood. Certain of the reasons for this have been increasingly stressed in recent years: with increased longevity, and smaller-sized families, the traditional mother role simply does not occupy a sufficient portion of a woman's life span to constitute any longer the exclusive adult role for which a young woman should be prepared.[†] American girls spend more time as

*A full picture of this post-World War II development is traced in Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1963). See particularly Chapters 6 and 7—"Functional Freeze" and "Sex-Directed Educators."

[†]Demographic changes in the family life cycle between 1890 and 1950 are shown in great detail in Paul Glick's *American Families* (New York: John Wiley, 1957). It should also be noted that even in contemporary families with four or five children, child-bearing occupies a far shorter portion of a woman's life span than it did to achieve this size family fifty years ago because infant mortality has been so drastically reduced.

apprentice mothers with their dolls than they will as adult women with their own babies, and there is half a lifetime still ahead by the time the youngest child enters high school. Although studies have shown that women today are working in the home roughly the same number of hours a week as their mothers did,¹ this is not because they have to do so: technological innovations in the production and distribution of food, clothing, and other household equipment have been such that homemaking no longer requires the specialized skills and time-consuming tasks it did until early in our century. Contemporary women often turn what should be labor-saving devices into labor-making devices. In the light of the many time-consuming tasks the American mother fifty years ago had to perform and the much longer workday for those in the labor force then, the woman in 1964 who holds down a full-time job will probably have as much or more time with her children as her grandmother had. Furthermore, most of the skills needed for adulthood are no longer taught within the family: child socialization is increasingly a shared enterprise among parents and teachers, doctors, nurses, club leaders, and instructors in an assortment of special skills.

These are perhaps all familiar points. What has not been seen is the more general point that *for the first time in the history of any known society, motherhood has become a full-time occupation for adult women*. In the past, whether a woman lived on a farm, a Dutch city in the seventeenth century, or a colonial town in the eighteenth century, women in all strata of society except the very top were never able to be full-time mothers as the twentieth-century middle-class American woman has become. These women were productive members of farm and craft teams along with their farmer, baker, or printer husbands and other adult kin. Children either shared in the work of the household or were left to amuse themselves; their mothers did not have the time to organize their play, worry about their development, discuss their problems. These women were not lonely, because the world came into their homes in the form of customers, clients, or patients in villages and towns, or farmhands and relatives on the farm; such women had no reason to complain of the boredom and solitude of spending ten-hour days alone with babies and young children, because their days were peopled with adults. There were no child specialists to tell the colonial merchant's wife or pioneer farmer's wife that her absorption in spinning, planting, churning, and

preserving left her children on their own too much, that how she fed her baby would shape his adult personality, or that leaving children with a variety of other adults while she worked would make them insecure.

There are two important questions this analysis raises: why has full-time motherhood been accepted by the overwhelming majority of American women, and how successful has been the new pattern of full-time motherhood of the past forty years or so? I believe the major answer to the first question is that the American woman has been encouraged by the experts to whom she has turned for guidance in child rearing to believe that her children need her continuous presence, supervision, and care and that she should find complete fulfillment in this role. If, for example, a woman reads an article by Dr. Spock on working mothers, she is informed that any woman who finds full-time motherhood produces nervousness is showing a "residue of difficult relationships in her own childhood"; if irritability and nervousness are not assuaged by a brief trip or two, she is probably in an emotional state which can be "relieved through regular counseling in a family social agency, or, if severe, through psychiatric treatment"; and finally, "any mother of a preschool child who is considering a job should discuss the issues with a social worker before making her decision."² Since the social worker shares the same analytic framework that Dr. Spock does, there is little doubt what the advice will be; the woman is left with a judgment that wanting more than motherhood is not natural but a reflection of her individual emotional disturbance.

The fundamental tenet of the theory underlying such advice is that the physically and emotionally healthy development of the infant requires the loving involvement of the mother with the child. If an infant does not receive stable continuous mothering, there is almost invariably severe physical and emotional disturbance. There is apparently ample clinical evidence to support these points. Studies have suggested that prolonged separation from parents, and particularly from the mother, has serious effects upon infants and young children.³ However, practitioners make unwarranted extrapolations from these findings when they advise that *any* separation of mother and child is risky and hazardous for the healthy development of the

child.* Despite the fact that the empirical evidence stems from instances of prolonged, traumatic separation caused by such things as the death or serious illness of the mother, or the institutionalization of the child, this viewpoint is applied to the situation of an employed mother absent from the home on a regular basis. No one predicts that any dire consequences will flow from a woman's absence from home several afternoons a week to engage in a shopping spree, keep medical appointments, or play bridge; nor is a father considered to produce severe disturbance in his young children even if his work schedule reduces contact with them to the daylight hours of a weekend. But women who have consulted pediatricians and family counselors about their resuming work are firmly told that they should remain at home for the sake of their children's emotional health.[†]

What effect *does* maternal employment have upon children? Many sociologists of the family have raised this question during the past fifteen years, expecting to find negative effects as psychoanalytic theory predicted. In fact, the focus of most maternal employment studies has been on the effect of mothers' working upon the personalities of their children, somewhat less often on the tensions and strains between the mother role and the occupational role,[‡] seldom on the question of how maternal employment affects the woman's

*A few authors have seen this claim that all separation of the child from the biological mother or mother surrogate, even for a few days, is inevitably damaging to the child, as a new and subtle form of antifeminism, by which men, under the guise of exacting the importance of maternity, are tying women more tightly to their children than any real clinical or cultural evidence indicates is necessary. See Hilde Bruch, *Don't Be Afraid of Your Child* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Young, 1952); and Margaret Mead, "Some Theoretical Considerations on the Problem of Mother-Child Separation," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 24 (1954):471-83.

[†]It is interesting in this connection that studies concerning the separation of the mother and child are frequently cited as cases of *maternal deprivation*, but those concerning the separation of the father and child are cited more neutrally as cases of *father absence*, never as *paternal deprivation*.

[‡]Social scientists raise the question of whether there are not such diametrically opposed requirements of an occupational role from the mother role as to involve great strain between the two. It is argued that because of this contrast between the two spheres, one or the other role must "suffer"—there will be "role conflict." The researchers were not prepared to find either that women could slip back and forth between these two spheres just as men have done for decades, without any of the same difficulty predicted for women, or that the mother role may be subtly changed in the direction of more rationality, greater stress on independence and autonomy in children than is found in the child-rearing values of nonworking mothers (see Faye VonMering, "Professional and Non-Professional Women as Mothers," *Journal of Social Psychology* 42 [August 1955]:21-34). Rather, the researcher expected to find maternal neglect, negative effect on children's personality, or inadequacy in occupational roles, such as absenteeism, overly personal view of work relationships, etc. As in many areas in which role conflict has been predicted, human beings have a greater tolerance for sharp contrasts in role demands than social scientists credit them with.

satisfactions with herself, her home, and marriage. *To date, there is no evidence of any negative effects traceable to maternal employment*; children of working mothers are no more likely than children of nonworking mothers to become delinquent, to show neurotic symptoms, to feel deprived of maternal affection, to perform poorly in school, to lead narrower social lives, etc.⁴ Many of the researchers in the 1950s frankly admitted surprise at their negative findings. In a study reported in 1962,⁵ the only significant difference found between working and nonworking mothers was the mother's confidence about her role as mother: 42 percent of the working mothers but only 24 percent of the nonworking mothers expressed concern about their maternal role, "often by explicit questioning and worry as to whether working is interfering with their relationships and the rearing of their children." Yet these working women did not actually differ from the at-home mothers in the very things that concerned them: there were no differences between these women in the emotional relationships with their children, household allocation of responsibilities, principles of child rearing, etc. The working mothers appeared to share the prevailing view that their children would suffer as a result of their employment, though in fact their children fare as well as those of nonworking mothers.⁶

It would appear, therefore, that the employment of women when their children are eight years of age or older has no negative effect on the children. What about the earlier years, from infancy until school age? In the American literature, there is little to refer to as yet which bears directly upon the effect of maternal employment on the infant or toddler, partly because employment of mothers with preschool children is so negligible in the United States, partly because the measurement of "effects" on young children is difficult and cannot be done with the research tools which have been used in most studies of maternal employment effects—questionnaires administered to mothers and to their school-age children.*

*The Burchinal-Rossman research cited previously did give special attention to employment of mothers during the child's early years. Their seventh- and eleventh-grade students were divided according to when the maternal employment occurred—i.e., whether during the first three years of the child's life, second three, between the ages of one and six, only within the previous thirty months, or for the child's entire life. How long the mother has been working, or when in the growth of the child she began work, showed no significant effect upon the children's development: those whose mothers were working when they were under three years of age did not differ from those whose mothers began working when they were adolescents.

There is, however, one significant body of data which is of considerable relevance to the question of the effect of maternal employment upon infants and very young children. Maternal employment is a regular pattern of separation of mother and child: the Israel kibbutzim are collective settlements with several decades of experience in precisely this pattern. On the kibbutz, infants live in children's houses where their physical care and training are largely handled. During the infancy months the mother visits the house to feed the infant; as toddlers, children begin a pattern of visiting with their parents for a few hours each day, living in the children's houses for the remaining portions of their days and nights. A number of studies have been conducted to investigate the effect of this intermittent multiple mothering on the young child.⁷ They all point to essentially the same conclusion: the kibbutz child-rearing practices have no deleterious effects upon the subsequent personality development of the children involved. In fact, there are a number of respects in which the kibbutz-reared Israeli children exceed those reared in the traditional farm family: the kibbutz children showed a more accurate perception of reality, more breadth of interest and cultural background, better emotional control, and greater overall maturity.

Continuous mothering, even in the first few years of life, does not seem to be necessary for the healthy emotional growth of a child.* The crux of the matter appears to be in the nature of the care which is given to the child.[†] If a child is reared by a full-time mother who is rejecting and cold in her treatment of him, or if a child is reared in an

*There are of course other instances of infant and toddler care by persons supplementing the biological mother, notable among them being the creche and nursery school systems in the Soviet Union. What effect these early experiences of creche care have upon the subsequent personality development of Soviet young people is not known. Western observers who have visited them during the past several years have been impressed with the facilities, quality of staff personnel, and general happy mood of the children seen in them, but there is no rigorous evidence to substantiate these impressions, or assess the effect of such early separation from the mother upon personality.

†In this analysis, I am placing primary emphasis on the quality of the care given to the children. Another specification of maternal employment involves introducing the motivations and satisfactions of working and nonworking mothers: many women work who do not wish to work, and many women are at home who do not wish to be at home. One recent study which took these factors into consideration found that the nonworking mothers who are dissatisfied with not working (who want to work but, out a sense of "duty," do not work) show the greatest problems in child rearing—more difficulty controlling their children, less emotional satisfaction in relationships to their children, less confidence in their functioning as mothers. Cf. Marian Radke Yarrow et al., "Child-rearing in Families of Working and Non-working Mothers," *Sociometry* 25 (June 1962):122-40.

institutional setting lacking in warmth and stimulation and with an inadequate staff, both children will show personality disturbances in later years. If the loving care of the biological mother is shared by other adults who provide the child with a stable, loving environment, the child will prosper at least as well as and potentially better than one with a good full-time mother.* In the section below on child care and careers, I shall suggest institutional innovations which would ensure good-quality care for children and ease the combination of work and child rearing for women.

Turning now to the second question raised above, how successful has the new pattern of full-time motherhood been? Are women more satisfied with their lives in the mid-twentieth century than in the past? Does motherhood fulfill them, provide them with a sufficient canvas to occupy a lifetime? Are contemporary children living richer lives, developing greater ego strength to carry them through a complex adulthood? Are children better off for having full-time mothers?

I think the answer to all the questions posed above is a firm *no*. Educators, child psychologists, and social analysts report an increasing tendency for American middle-class children to be lacking in initiative, excessively dependent on others for direction and decision, physically soft.⁸ Our children have more toys and play equipment than children in any other society, yet they still become bored and ask their mothers for "something to do." No society has as widespread a problem of juvenile delinquency and adolescent rebellion as the United States. Alcoholism, compulsive sex seeking, and adolescent

*This shifts the ground of the problem of maternal employment to a very different level from the one on which it is usually discussed. As a research problem, the crucial question is not whether the mother is employed or not, but what is the quality of the care given to the children—whether by the mother alone or a combination of other adults. Since full-time mothers vary from loving care to rejecting neglect, and mother substitutes may be presumed to vary in the same way, it is scarcely surprising that maternal employment *per se* shows very little effect upon the personality of children. Social scientists have uncritically borrowed the assumption of the psychoanalysts that the mental health of the child is possible only with continuous care by the biological mother. What is clearly called for is a shift in research definition from maternal employment versus full-time motherhood, to the quality of the care the child receives under conditions of full- and part-time working or nonworking mothers. There is also a need for research which is based on a clear conceptualization of the variables of both "maternal care" and "maternal deprivation." For a careful review of crucial dimensions of maternal care and their effect upon infants, see Leon J. Yarrow, "Research in Dimensions of Early Maternal Care," *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly* 9 (April 1963):101–14. The same author has written a careful reevaluation of the concept of maternal deprivation: "Maternal Deprivation: Toward an Empirical and Conceptual Reevaluation," *Psychological Bulletin* 58 (1961):459–90.

delinquency are no longer social problems confined to the working-class, socially disorganized sections of our cities, but have been on the increase in the middle-class suburb in the past twenty years and involve more women and girls than in the past. There is a strong strand of male protest against the mother or "matriarch" in both our beatnik culture and our avant-garde literature: social and artistic extremes are seldom fully deviant from the middle range in a society, but show in an exaggerated, heightened way the same though less visible tendencies in the social majority.

In a large proportion of cases, the etiology of mental illness is linked to inadequacy in the mother-child relationship. A high proportion of the psychoneurotic discharges from the army during World War II was traced to these young soldiers' overly dependent relationships to their mothers.⁹ This has been the subject of much earnest discussion in the years since the war, but the focus has remained on the mother-son relationship, I suspect only because as a fighter, a professional man, or a worker, male performance is seen to be more crucial for society than female performance. But dependence, immaturity, and ego diffusion have been characteristic of daughters as well as sons. The only difference is that, in the case of daughters, this less often reaches the overt level of a social problem because young women move quickly from under their mothers' tutelage into marriage and parenthood of their own: female failures are therefore not as socially visible, for they are kept within the privacy of family life and psychoanalytic case records. It is a shortsighted view indeed to consider the immature wife, dominating mother, or interfering mother-in-law as a less serious problem to the larger society than the male homosexual, psychoneurotic soldier, or ineffectual worker, for it is the failure of the mother which perpetuates the cycle from one generation to the next, affecting sons and daughters alike.

Disturbing trends of this sort cannot all be traced to the American woman's excessive and exclusive involvement with home and family. We live in turbulent times, and some part of these trends reflects the impact of world tension and conflict. But there is no reason to assume that world tension is relevant to many of them. Emotional and physical difficulties after childbirth or during the menopause years, the higher incidence of college girl than college boy breakdowns, the shrunken initiative and independence of children are clearly not

explained by world conflict. Besides, vast sections of American society remain totally unmoved and unaffected by international political and military events until they directly impinge on their own daily lives. Since history is both written and produced more by men than by women, the fact that our writers are preoccupied with the relationship to the mother points to difficulties in our family system more than the course of world events.

It is a paradox of our social history that motherhood has become a full-time occupation in precisely the era when objectively it could, and perhaps should, be a part-time occupation for a short phase of a woman's life span. I suspect that the things women do for and with their children have been needlessly elaborated to make motherhood a full-time job. Unfortunately, in this very process the child's struggle for autonomy and independence, for privacy and the right to worry things through for himself are subtly and pervasively reduced by the omnipresent mother. As a young child, he is given great permissive freedom, but he must exercise it under supervision. As an adolescent, he is given a great deal of freedom, but his parents worry excessively about what he does with it. Edgar Friedenberg has argued that there is entirely too much parental concentration on adolescent children, with the result that it has become increasingly difficult to *be* an adolescent in American society.¹⁰ He suggests that parents are interested in youth to the extent that they find their own stage of life uninteresting. Middle-class children are observed and analyzed by their mothers as though they were hothouse plants psychologically, on whose personalities any pressure might leave an indelible bruise. If a woman's adult efforts are concentrated exclusively on her children, she is likely more to stifle than broaden her children's perspective and preparation for adult life. Any stress or failure in a child becomes a failure of herself, and she is therefore least likely to truly help her child precisely when the child most needs support.¹¹ In myriad ways the mother binds the child to her, dampening his initiative, resenting his growing independence in adolescence, creating a subtle dependence which makes it difficult for the child to achieve full adult stature without a rebellion which leaves him with a mixture of resentment and guilt that torments him in his mother's declining years.

It seems to me no one has linked these things together adequately. Psychiatric counselors of college students frequently have as their

chief task that of helping their young patients to free themselves from the entangling web of dependence upon their parents, primarily their mothers, and encouraging them to form stable, independent lives of their own. In other words, if the patient is eighteen years old the analyst tries to help her free herself from her mother, but if the next patient is twenty-five years old with young children at home, the analyst tells her the children would suffer emotional damage if she left them on a regular basis to hold down a job. The very things which would reduce the excessive dependency of children before it becomes a critical problem are discouraged by the counselor or analyst during the years when the dependency is being formed. If it is true that the adult is what the child was, and if we wish adults to be assertive, independent, responsible people, then they should be reared in a way which prevents excessive dependence on a parent. They should be cared for by a number of adults in their childhood, and their parents should truly encourage their independence and responsibility during their youthful years, not merely give lip service to these parental goals. The best way to encourage such independence and responsibility in the child is for the mother to be a living model of these qualities herself. If she had an independent life of her own, she would find her stage of life interesting, and therefore be less likely to live for and through her children. By maintaining such an independent life, the American mother might finally provide her children with something she can seldom give when she is at home—a healthy dose of inattention and a chance for adolescence to be a period of fruitful immaturity and growth.* If enough American women developed vital and enduring interests outside the family and remained actively in them throughout the childbearing years, we might then find a reduction in extreme adolescent rebellion, immature early marriages, maternal domination of children, and interference by mothers and mothers-in-law in the lives of married children.

There remains one further general characteristic of our industrial society which has relevance to the question of why American society should achieve full sex equality. Our family unit is small, for the most part geographically, if not socially, isolated from its kin. This small

*This has been argued by Eric Larrabee, although he does not suggest the employment of the mother as the way to make the older woman's life more interesting. See Eric Larrabee, "Childhood in Twentieth Century America," in *The Nation's Children*, ed. Eli Ginzberg, vol. 3, *Problems and Prospects* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 199–216.

family unit is possible because of the increased longevity in highly industrialized societies. In agricultural societies, with their high rate of mortality, many parents die before they have completed the rearing of their young. The extended family provided substitutes for such parents without disturbing the basic lines of kin affiliation and property rights of these children. In our modern family system it is an unusual event for women or men to be widowed while they have young dependent children. This also means, however, that American families must fend for themselves in the many emergencies less critical than the death of a spouse: army service, long business or professional trips, prolonged physical or emotional illness, separation or divorce often require that one spouse carry the primary responsibility for the family, even if this is cushioned or supplemented by insurance, government aid, paid helpers, or relatives. The insurance advertisements which show fathers bending over a cradle and begin "what would happen if?" evoke a twinge of fear in their readers precisely because parents recognize the lonely responsible positions they would be in if serious illness or death were to strike their homes. In our family system, then, it is a decided asset if men and women can quickly and easily substitute for or supplement each other as parents and as breadwinners. I believe these are important elements in the structure of our economy and family system which exert pressure toward an equality between men and women. It is not merely that a companionate or equalitarian marriage is a desirable relationship between wife and husband, but that the functioning of an urban industrial society is facilitated by equality between men and women in work, marriage, and parenthood.

The conclusions I have drawn from this analysis are as follows: full-time motherhood is neither sufficiently absorbing to the woman nor beneficial to the child to justify a contemporary woman's devoting fifteen or more years to it as her exclusive occupation. Sooner or later—and I think it should be sooner—women have to face the question of who they are besides their children's mother.

A major solution to this quest would be found in the full and equal involvement of women in the occupational world, the culmination of the feminist movement of the last 150 years. This is not to overlook the fact that involvement as a volunteer in politics or community organizations or a serious dedication to a creative art can be a

solution for many women. These areas of participation and involvement provide innumerable women with a keen sense of life purpose, and women are making significant and often innovative contributions in these pursuits. A job per se does not provide a woman, or a man either, with any magical path to self-fulfillment; nor does just any community volunteer work or halfhearted dabbling in a creative art.

Women are already quite well represented in volunteer organizations in American communities. However, broadening the range of alternatives open to women and chosen by women for their life patterns is still to be achieved in the occupational world. It is also true that at the most challenging reaches of both political and community volunteer work, the activities have become increasingly professionalized. Thus, while many women have and will continue to make innovative contributions to these fields as volunteers, such opportunities have become limited. Furthermore, many such women often find themselves carrying what amounts to a full-time job as a "volunteer executive," yet neither the recognition nor the rewards are equivalent to what they would receive in comparable positions in the occupational system.¹² Hence, the major focus in this essay will be on the means by which the full and equal involvement of well-educated women in the occupational world may be achieved. For reasons which will become clear later, I believe that the occupational involvement of women would also be the major means for reducing American women's dominance in marriage and parenthood, and thus for allowing for the participation of men as equal partners in family life.

Of course there have already been changes in the extent and the nature of women's participation in the American labor force. Indeed, this is sometimes cited as proof that sex equality has been achieved in the United States. There are roughly twenty-three million American women in the labor force, and it is predicted that this will swell to thirty million by 1970. About three-fifths of these women are married, an increase of well over 20 percent since 1940. It should be noted that this increase came predominantly from women between the ages of thirty-five and fifty-four years, after the child-rearing years and before the usual retirement age for workers. This is a major social change, to be sure, and people who still raise the question of whether married women should work are arguing after the fact, for such

women are doing so at increasing rates. The point is, however, that most American women—65 percent—do *not* work outside the home, and those who do are found largely in blue-collar or low-skill white-collar occupations. Men fill roughly 85 percent of the very top professional and technical jobs in the United States. Furthermore, only a very small proportion of American wives work if their husbands are in the middle and top income brackets or if they have young children. Finally, the distribution of the female labor force by age shows two major peaks of female participation, before and for a short time after marriage, and then for the fifteen years from their early forties through middle fifties. Withdrawal and reentry many years later is now a common female work pattern in the United States. As long as this pattern continues, women will not increase their representation in the top professional and technical occupations.*

Over the past twenty years, women in many European countries have doubled or more their representation in the professional occupations. By comparison, American women constitute a smaller proportion of the professional world today than they did twenty years ago. That this reflects a lowering of ambition among American women is suggested by the fact that of all the women capable of doing college work, only one out of four does so, compared to one out of two men. This is the point at which we begin to tap a deeper root of women's motivations in the United States. Whether a woman works steadily throughout her marriage or returns to work after the child-rearing period, no significant increase of women in the professional and high-skill job categories will occur unless American women's attitude toward education and work is changed.¹³ To study and to prepare for a future job "in case I have to work" is just as poor a preparation for occupational participation as the postponement of learning domestic skills "until I have to" is a poor preparation for the homemaker role. Both views reflect a digging in of the heels into the adolescent moment of a lifetime. In many ways the middle-class girl considers only the present, the here and now, as do most members of the working class, and not the future, as do her father, brothers, and

*Viola Klein's study of English working women shows the same pattern: withdrawal and return to work at a later age is paid for by a loss of occupational status. See Viola Klein, *Working Wives*, Occasional Papers No. 15 (London: Institute of Personnel Management, 1960), 21–24.

male friends. There is evidence to suggest that such an emphasis on the present is characteristic not only of the American woman at college age, but also more generally throughout her life span. Thus, Gallup's portrait of the American woman shows the same characteristic at all points during the younger half of the life cycle: young unmarried women as well as mature women with their children now entering high school give little thought to and no preparation for their life over forty years of age.¹⁴

The middle-class wife of a successful business executive or professional man has a special problem. To earn a salary in the occupational world, she will be judged by her own achieved merits without regard to her social position or her husband's influence. Unless she has had the education and experience necessary to hold a position of some prestige, she will experience social and personal barriers to entering the labor force. In the absence of such education and experience, she is qualified to be only the occupational subordinate of men who are her equals socially, a status incongruity few women are likely to tolerate. By contrast, no matter how menial, her service as a volunteer will be socially approved. Unless such women secure specialized training before marriage or acquire it after marriage, there will be little increase in the proportion of working wives and mothers in the upper half of the middle class. Many such women with a flair for organization have found full scope for their independent fulfillment in volunteer work in politics, education, social welfare, and the arts. Unfortunately, there are innumerable other women for whom such outlets have little attraction who realize they have missed their chance for independent self-fulfillment, and who have little opportunity for a second chance by their late forties.

It has been argued by some sociologists that the American marriage is already too fragile to sustain competition at comparable skill levels between spouses.¹⁵ If this were true and women are also reluctant to work at lower-prestige jobs than their husbands, this would effectively freeze most middle-class women out of the occupational world. I would raise three points concerning this assumption. First, husbands and working wives are usually found in different segments of the occupational system, which makes comparison of success a difficult matter. For example, is an architect working for a large firm and earning \$20,000 a year more or less successful than his wife who directs a large family-welfare agency and earns \$15,000 a

year? Second, even were such achievements in nonfamily roles to provoke some competitive feeling between husband and wife, I think the consequences of this competition are far less potentially harmful to the marriage or to the children than the situation of the well-educated able woman who is not working and engages instead in a competition with her husband for the affections and primary loyalties of the children. If a woman is markedly more successful than her husband, it would probably create difficulty in the marriage, particularly if there are residues of traditional expectations of male breadwinner dominance on the part of either partner to the marriage. But competition does not necessarily mean conflict. It can be a social spice and a source of pride and stimulation in a marriage of equals. Last, one must face up to the fact that a new social goal exacts a price. A change toward sex equality may cause some temporary marital dislocations, but this is not sufficient reason to expect all women to remain enclosed in the past.

INSTITUTIONAL LEVERS FOR ACHIEVING SEX EQUALITY

In turning to the problem of how equality between the sexes may be implemented as a societal goal, I shall concentrate on the three major areas of child care, residence, and education. Institutional change in these areas in no sense exhausts the possible spheres in which institutional change could be effected to facilitate the goal of sex equality. Clearly, government and industry, for example, could effect highly significant changes in the relations between the sexes. But one must begin somewhere, and I have chosen these three topics, for they all involve questions of critical significance to the goal of equality between men and women.

1. It is widely assumed that rearing children and maintaining a career is so difficult a combination that except for those few women with an extraordinary amount of physical strength, emotional endurance, and dedicated sense of calling to their work, it is unwise for women to attempt the combination. Women who have successfully combined child rearing and careers are considered out of the ordinary, although many men with far heavier work responsibilities who yet spend willing, loving hours as fathers, and who also contribute to home maintenance, are cause for little comment. We should be wary of the assumption that home and work combinations are necessarily

difficult. The simplified contemporary home and smaller-sized family of a working mother today probably represent a lesser burden of responsibility than that shouldered by her grandmother.

This does not mean that we should overlook the real difficulties that are involved for women who attempt this combination. Working mothers do have primary responsibility for the hundreds of details involved in home maintenance, as planners and managers, even if they have household help to do the actual work. No one could suggest that child rearing and a career are easy to combine, or even that this is some royal road to greater happiness, but only that the combination would give innumerable intelligent and creative women a degree of satisfaction and fulfillment that they cannot obtain in any other way. Certainly many things have to "give" if a woman works when she also has young children at home. Volunteer and social activities, gardening and entertaining may all have to be curtailed. The important point to recognize is that as children get older, it is far easier to resume these social activities than it is to resume an interrupted career. The major difficulty, and the one most in need of social innovation, is the problem of providing adequate care for the children of working mothers.

If a significant number of American middle-class women wish to work while their children are still young and in need of care and supervision, who are these mother substitutes to be? In the American experience to date, they have been either relatives or paid domestic helpers. A study conducted by the Children's Bureau in 1958 outlines the types of child-care arrangements made by women working full-time who had children under twelve years of age.¹⁶ The study showed that the majority of these children (57 percent) were cared for by relatives: fathers, older siblings, grandparents, and others. About 21 percent were cared for by nonrelatives, including neighbors as well as domestic helpers. Only 2 percent of the children were receiving group care—in day nurseries, day-care centers, settlement houses, nursery schools, and the like. Of the remainder, 8 percent were expected to take care of themselves, the majority being the "latchkey" youngsters of ten and twelve years of age about whom we have heard a good deal in the press in recent years.

These figures refer to a national sample of employed mothers and concern women in blue-collar jobs and predominantly low-skill

white-collar jobs. Presumably, the proportion of middle-class working mothers who can rely on either relatives or their husbands would be drastically lower than this national average and will probably decline even further in future years. Many of today's and more of tomorrow's American grandmothers are going to be wage earners themselves and not baby-sitters for their grandchildren. In addition, as middle-class women enter the occupational world, they will experience less of a tug to remain close to the kinswomen of their childhood, and hence may contribute further to the pattern of geographic and social separation between young couples and both sets of their parents. Nor can many middle-class husbands care for their children, for their work hours are typically the same as those of their working wives: there can be little dovetailing of the work schedules of wives and husbands in the middle class as there can be in the working class.

At present, the major child-care arrangement for the middle-class woman who plans a return to work has to be hired household help. In the 1920s the professional and business wife-mother had little difficulty securing such domestic help, for there were thousands of first-generation immigrant girls and women in our large cities whose first jobs in America were as domestic servants.* In the 1960s, the situation is quite different: the major source of domestic help in our large cities is Negro and Puerto Rican women. Assuming the continuation of economic affluence and further success in the American Negro's struggle for equal opportunity in education, jobs, and housing, this reservoir will be further diminished in coming decades. The daughters of many present-day Negro domestic servants will be able to secure far better paying and more prestigious jobs than their mothers can obtain in 1964. There will be increasing difficulty of finding adequate child-care help in future years as a result.

The problem is not merely that there may be decreasing numbers of domestic helpers available at the same time more women require

*In one study conducted for the Bureau of Vocational Information in 1925, Collier found that 42 percent of the one hundred professional and business mothers she interviewed had two or more full-time domestic servants to maintain their homes and care for their children during the day; only nine of these one hundred women had no full-time servants, five of whom had their mothers living with them. Virginia MacMakin Collier, *Marriage and Careers: A Study of One Hundred Women Who Are Wives, Mothers, Homemakers and Professional Women* (New York: The Channel Bookshop, 1926), 59, 74.

their aid. There is an even more important question involved: are domestic helpers the best-qualified persons to leave in charge of young children? Most middle-class families have exacting standards for the kind of teachers and the kind of schools they would like their children to have. But a working mother who searches for a competent woman to leave in charge of her home has to adjust to considerably lower standards than she would tolerate in any nursery school program in which she placed her young son or daughter, either because such competent help is scarce or because the margin of salary left after paying for good child care and the other expenses associated with employment is very slight.

One solution to the problem of adequate child care would be an attempt to upgrade the status of child-care jobs. I think one productive way would be to develop a course of study which would yield a certificate for practical mothering, along the lines that such courses and certificates have been developed for practical nursing. There would be several important advantages to such a program. There are many older women in American communities whose lives seem empty because their children are grown and their grandchildren far away, yet who have no interest in factory or sales work, for they are deeply committed to life and work within the context of a home. Indeed, there are many older women who now work in factories or as cashiers or salesclerks who would be much more satisfied with child-care jobs if the status and pay for such jobs were upgraded. These are the women, sometimes painfully lonely for contact with children, who stop young mothers to comment on the baby in the carriage, to talk with the three-year-old, and to discuss their own distant grandchildren. I think many of these women would be attracted by a program of "refresher" courses in first aid, child development, books and crafts appropriate for children of various ages, and the special problems of the mother substitute-child relationship. Such a program would build upon their own experiences as mothers but would update and broaden their knowledge, bringing it closer to the values and practices of the middle-class woman who is seeking a practical mother for her family. Substitute motherhood for which she earns a wage, following active motherhood of her own, could provide continuity, meaning, and variety to the life span of those American women who are committed to the traditional conception of woman's role. Such a course of study might be developed

in a number of school contexts—a branch of a college department of education, an adult education extension program, or a school of nursing.

A longer-range solution to the problem of child care will involve the establishment of a network of child-care centers.* Most of the detailed plans for such centers must be left for future discussion, but there are several important advantages to professionally run child-care centers which should be noted. Most important, better care could be provided by such centers than any individual mother can provide by hiring a mother's helper, housekeeper, or even the practical mother I have just proposed. In a child-care center, there can be greater specialization of skills, better facilities and equipment, and play groups for the children. Second, a child-care center would mean less expense for the individual working mother and both higher wages and shorter hours for the staff of the center. Third, these centers could operate on a full-time, year-round schedule, something of particular importance for women trained in professional or technical fields, the majority of which can be handled only on a full-time basis. Except for the teaching fields, such women must provide for the afternoon care of their nursery-school- and kindergarten-age children, after-school hours for older children, and three summer months for all their children. Fourth, a child-care center could develop a roster of home-duty practical mothers or practical nurses to care for the ill or convalescent child at home, in much the way school systems now call upon substitute teachers to cover the classes of absent regular teachers.

A major practical problem is where to locate such child-care centers. During the years of experimentation which would follow acceptance of this idea, they might be in a variety of places, under a variety of organizational auspices, as a service facility offered by an

*Child-care centers would not be an entirely new phenomenon in the United States, for there were a number of municipal day-care centers established during World War II when the need for womanpower in factories engaged in war production made them necessary to free women to accept employment. There have also been continuing debates about the provision of child-care centers for other mothers, such as the ADC mother, the problem revolving about whether such women should be given sufficient money from municipal funds to stay at home and care for her children, or to establish child-care centers and thus enable such women to hold down jobs and at least partially support their children. In either case, the focus has been upon working-class women. Child-care centers as an institutional device to facilitate the combination of job and family by women in professional and technical occupations in the middle class are very rare and are largely confined to small private ventures in the large metropolises.

industrial firm, a large insurance company, a university, the federal or a state government. Community groups of women interested in such service might organize small centers of their own much as they have informal pooled baby-sitting services and cooperatively run nursery schools at the present time.

I believe that one of the most likely contexts for early experimentation with such child-care centers is the large urban university. As these universities continue to expand in future years, in terms of the size of the student body, the varied research institutes associated with the university and the expansion of administrative, technical, and counseling personnel, there will be increasing opportunity and increasing need for the employment of women. A child-care center established under the auspices of a major university would facilitate the return for training of older women to complete or refresh advanced training, forestall the dropping out of younger graduate married women with infants and young children to care for, and attract competent professional women to administrative, teaching, or research positions who would otherwise withdraw from their fields for the child-rearing years. It would also be an excellent context within which to innovate a program of child care, for the university has the specialists in psychology, education, and human development on whom to call for the planning, research, and evaluation that the establishment of child-care centers would require. If a university-sponsored child-care program were successful and widely publicized, it would then constitute an encouragement and a challenge to extend child-care centers from the auspices of specific organizations to a more inclusive community basis. A logical location for community child-care centers may be as wings of the elementary schools, which have precisely the geographic distribution throughout a city to make for easy access between the homes of very young children and the centers for their daytime care. Since school and center would share a location, it would also facilitate easy supervision of older children during the after-school hours. The costs of such care would also be considerably reduced if the facilities of the school were available for the older children during after-school hours, under the supervision of the staff of the child-care center. There are, of course, numerous problems to be solved in working out the details of any such program under a local educational system, but assuming widespread support for the desirability of community facilities for child care, these are

technical and administrative problems well within the competence of school and political officials in our communities.

I have begun this discussion of the institutional changes needed to effect equality between the sexes with the question of child-care provision because it is of central importance in permitting women to enter and remain in the professional, technical, and administrative occupations in which they are presently so underrepresented. Unless provision for child care is made, women will continue to find it necessary to withdraw from active occupational involvement during the child-rearing years. However, the professional and scientific fields are all growing in knowledge and skill, and even a practitioner who remains in the field often has difficulty keeping abreast of new developments. A woman who withdraws for a number of years from a professional field has an exceedingly difficult time catching up. The more exacting the occupation, then, the shorter the period of withdrawal should probably be from active participation in the labor force. If a reserve of trained practical mothers were available, a professional woman could return to her field a few months after the birth of a child, leaving the infant under the care of a practical mother until he or she reached the age of two years, at about which age the child could enter a child-care center for daytime care. Assuming a two-child family, this could mean not more than one year of withdrawal from her professional field for the working mother.

2. The preferred residential pattern of the American middle class in the postwar decades has been suburban. In many sections of the country it is difficult to tell where one municipality ends and another begins, for the farm, forest, and wasteland between towns and cities have been built up with one housing development after another. The American family portrayed in the mass media typically occupies a house in this sprawling suburbia, and here too, are the American women, and sometimes men, whose problems are aired and analyzed with such frequency. We know a good deal about the characteristics and quality of social life in the American suburb¹⁷ and the problems of the men and women who live in them. We hear about the changing political complexion of the American suburbs, the struggle of residents to provide sufficient community facilities to meet their growing needs. But the social and personal difficulties of suburban women are more likely to be attributed to their early family relationships or to the contradictory nature of the socialization of girls in our society

than to any characteristic of the environment in which they now live. My focus will be somewhat different: I shall examine the suburban residence pattern for the limitations it imposes on the utilization of women's creative work abilities and the participation of men in family life. Both limitations have important implications for the lives of boys and girls growing up in the suburban home.

The geographic distance between home and work has a number of implications for the role of the father-husband in the family. It reduces the hours of possible contact between children and their fathers. The hour or more men spend in cars, buses, or trains may serve a useful decompression function by providing time in which to sort out and assess the experiences at home and the events of the workday, but it is questionable whether this outweighs the disadvantage of severely curtailing the early morning and late afternoon hours during which men could be with their children.

The geographic distance also imposes a rigid exclusion of the father from the events which highlight the children's lives. Commuting fathers can rarely participate in any special daytime activities at home or at school, whether a party, a play the child performs in, or a conference with a teacher. It is far less rewarding to a child to report to his father at night about such a party or part in a play than to have his father present at these events. If the husband-father must work late or attend an evening function in the city, he cannot sandwich in a few family hours but must remain in the city. This is the pattern which prompted Margaret Mead to characterize the American middle-class father as the "children's mother's husband," and partly why mother looms so oversized in the lives of suburban children.

Any social mixing of family-neighborhood and job associates is reduced or made quite formal: a work colleague cannot drop in for an after-work drink or a Saturday brunch when an hour or more separates the two men and their families. The father-husband's office and work associates have a quality of unreality to both wife and children. All these things sharpen the differences between the lives of men and women—fewer mutual acquaintances, less sharing of the day's events, and perhaps most importantly, less simultaneous filling of their complementary parent roles. The image of parenthood to the child is mostly motherhood, a bit of fatherhood, and practically no parenthood as a joint enterprise shared at the same time by father and mother. Many

suburban parents, I suspect, spend more time together as verbal parents—discussing their children in the children's absence—than they do actively interacting with their children, the togetherness cult notwithstanding. For couples whose relationship in courtship and early marriage was equalitarian, the pressures are strong in the suburban setting for parenthood to be highly differentiated and skewed to an ascendant position of the mother. Women dominate the family, men the job world.

The geographic distance between home and the center of the city restricts the world of the wife-mother in a complementary fashion. Not only does she have to do and be more things to her children, but she is confined to the limitations of the suburban community for a great many of her extrafamilial experiences. That suburban children are restricted in their social exposure to other young children and relatively young adults, mostly women and all of the same social class, has often been noted. I think the social restriction of the young wife to women of her own age and class is of equal importance: with very few older persons in her immediate environment, she has little firsthand exposure to the problems attending the empty-nest stage of life, which lies ahead for herself. It is easy for her to continue to be satisfied to live each day as it comes, with little thought of preparing for the thirty-odd years when her children are no longer dependent upon her. If the suburban wife-mother had more opportunity to become acquainted with older widows and grandmothers, this would be pressed home to her in a way that might encourage a change in her unrealistic expectations of the future, with some preparation for that stage of life while she is young.*

*George Gallup and Evan Hill, "The American Woman," *The Saturday Evening Post* (22 December 1962). One must read this survey very carefully to get behind the gloss of the authors' rosy perspective. Gallup reports that almost half of the married women in the sample claimed that childbirth was the "most thrilling event" in their lives. He gives two quotes to illustrate why these women were so fascinated by childbirth: one stresses the point that it was "the one time in my life when everything was right"; the other points out "you've done something that's recognized as a good thing to do, and you're the center of attention." If these are truly typical, it tells us a good deal about the underlying attitude toward the thousands of days on which no child is born: things are *not* all right, and there must be some sense of being on the sidelines, of having a low level of self-esteem, if childbirth is important because "society views it as good" and it is the only time in her life that she is the important center of attention. In other parts of the article, which generally stresses the central importance of children to women, and their high satisfaction with marriage, we learn that a large proportion of American women wish the schools would do more of the socializing of these children—teach them good citizenship, how to drive, sex education; and if these women were so satisfied with their lives, why does only 10 percent of the sample want their daughters to live the same lives they have? Instead, these women say they want their daughters to get more education and to marry later than they did. If marriage is the perfect female state, then why wish to postpone it, unless there are unexpressed sides of the self which have not been fulfilled?

If and when the suburban woman awakens from this short-range perspective and wants either to work or to prepare for a return to work when her children are older, how is she to do this, given the suburban pattern of residence? It is all very well to urge that school systems should extend adult education, that colleges and universities must make it possible for older women to complete education interrupted ten or more years previously or to be retrained for new fields; but this is a difficult program for the suburban wife to participate in. She lives far from the center of most large cities, where the educational facilities tend to be concentrated, in a predominantly middle-class community, where domestic help is often difficult to arrange and transportation often erratic during the hours she would be using it.

It is for these reasons that I believe any attempt to draw a significant portion of married women into the mainstream of occupational life must involve a reconsideration of the suburban pattern of living. Decentralization of business and industry has only partly alleviated the problem: a growing proportion of the husbands living in the suburbs also work in the suburbs. There are numerous shops and service businesses providing job opportunities for the suburban wife. Most such jobs, however, are at skill levels far below the ability potential and social status of the suburban middle-class wife. Opportunities for the more exacting professional, welfare, and business jobs are still predominantly in the central sections of the city. In addition, since so many young wives and mothers in this generation married very young, before their formal education was completed, they will need more schooling before they can hope to enter the fields in which their talents can be most fruitfully exercised, in jobs which will not be either dull or a status embarrassment to themselves and their husbands. Numerous retail stores have opened suburban branches;

The only strong critical point made is the following: "with early weddings and extended longevity, marriage is now a part-time career for women, and unless they prepare now for the freer years, this period will be a loss. American society will hardly accept millions of ladies of leisure, or female drones, in their 40's" (p. 32). But only 31 percent of the sample reported they are "taking courses or following a plan to improve themselves," a third of these involving improvement of their physical shape or appearance. The photographs accompanying this article reveal the authors' own focus on the years of youth rather than of maturity: of twenty-nine women appearing in these pictures, only two are clearly of women over forty-five years of age.

colleges and universities have yet to do so. A woman can spend in the suburb, but she can neither learn nor earn.

That some outward expansion of American cities has been necessary is clear, given the population increase in our middle- to large-sized cities. But there are many tracts in American cities between the business center and the outlying suburbs which imaginative planning and architectural design could transform and which would attract the men and women who realize the drawbacks of a suburban residence. Unless there is a shift in this direction in American housing, I do not think there can be any marked increase in the proportion of married middle-class women who will enter the labor force. That Swedish women find work and home easier to combine than American women is closely related to the fact that Sweden avoided the sprawling suburban development in its postwar housing expansion. The emphasis in Swedish housing has been on inner-city housing improvement. With home close to diversified services for schooling, child care, household help, and places of work, it has been much easier in Sweden than in the United States to draw married women into the labor force and keep them there.

In contrast, the policy guiding the American federal agencies which affect the housing field, such as the FHA, have stressed the individual home, with the result that mortgage money was readily available to encourage builders to develop the sprawling peripheries of American cities. Luxury high-rise dwellings at the hub of the city and individual homes at the periphery have therefore been the pattern of middle-class housing development in the past twenty years. A shift in policy on the part of the federal government which would embrace buildings with three and four dwelling units and middle-income high-rise apartment buildings in the in-between zones of the city could go a long way to counteract this trend toward greater and greater distance between home and job. Not everyone can or will want to live close to the hub of the city. From spring through early fall, it is undoubtedly easier to rear very young children in a suburban setting with backyards for the exercise of healthy lungs and bodies. But this is at the expense of increased dependence of children on their mothers, of minimization of fathers' time with their youngsters, of restriction of the social environment of women, of drastic separation of family and job worlds, and of less opportunity for even part-time schooling or work for married women.

3. Men and women must not only be able to participate equally; they must want to do so. It is necessary, therefore, to look more closely into their motivations and the early experiences which mold their self-images and life expectations. A prime example of this point can be seen in the question of occupational choice. The goal of sex equality calls for not only an increase in the extent of women's participation in the occupational system, but a more equitable distribution of men and women in all the occupations which comprise that system. This means more women doctors, lawyers, and scientists, more men social workers and school teachers. To change the sex ratio within occupations can only be achieved by altering the sex typing of such occupations long before young people make a career decision.* Many men and women change their career plans during college, but this is usually within a narrow range of relatively homogeneous fields: a student may shift from medicine to a basic science, from journalism to teaching English. Radical shifts such as from nursing to medicine, from kindergarten teaching to the law, are rare indeed. Thus, while the problem could be attacked at the college level, any significant change in the career choices men and women make must be attempted when they are young boys and girls. It is during the early years of elementary school education that young people develop their basic views of appropriate characteristics, activities, and goals for their sex. It is for this reason that I shall give primary attention to the sources of sex-role stereotypes and what the elementary school system could do to eradicate these stereotypes and

*The extent of this sex typing of occupations is shown dramatically in a study of the June 1961 college graduates conducted by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago. Although the women in this sample of college graduates showed a superior academic performance during the college years—only 36 percent of the women in contrast to 50 percent of the men were in the “bottom half” of their class—their career aspirations differed markedly from those of men. Of those who were going on to graduate and professional schools in the fall of 1961, only 6 percent of those aspiring to careers in medicine were women; 7 percent in physics, 7 percent in pharmacology, 10 percent in business and administration, 28 percent in the social sciences. In contrast, women predominated in the following fields: 51 percent in humanities, 59 percent in elementary and secondary education, 68 percent in social work, 78 percent in health fields such as nursing, medical technology, physical and occupational therapy. In a sample of 33,782 college graduates, there were 11,000 women who expected to follow careers in elementary and secondary education, but only 285 women who hoped to enter the combined fields of medicine, law, and engineering. See James A. Davis and Norman Bradburn, “Great Aspirations: Career Plans of America’s June 1961 College Graduates,” mimeograph, National Opinion Research Center Report No. 82, September 1961. Davis and Bradburn report that some 40 percent of the graduates had changed their career plans during their college years (p. 40).

to help instead in the development of a more androgynous conception of sex role.*

The all-female social atmosphere of the American child has been frequently noted by social scientists, but it has been seen as a problem only in its effect upon boys. It has been claimed, for example, that the American boy must fight against a feminine identification this atmosphere encourages, with the result that he becomes overly aggressive, loudly asserting his maleness. In contrast, it is claimed that the American girl has an easy socialization, for she has an extensive number of feminine models in her environment to facilitate her identification as a female.

There are several important factors which this analysis overlooks. To begin with the boy: while it is certainly true that much of his primary group world is controlled by women, this does not mean that he has no image of the male social and job world as well. The content of the boy's image of man's work has a very special quality to it, however. Although an increasingly smaller proportion of occupations in a complex industrial society relies on sheer physical strength, the young boy's exposure to the work of men remains largely the occupations which do require physical strength. The jobs he can see are those which are socially visible, and these are jobs in which men are reshaping and repairing the physical environment. The young boy sees working-class men operating trucks, bulldozers, cranes; paving roads; building houses; planting trees; delivering groceries. This image is further reinforced by his television viewing: the gun-toting cowboy, the bat-swinging ballplayer, the arrow-slinging Indian. Space operas suggest not scientific exploration but military combat, the collision and collusion of other worlds. In short, even if the boy

*My attention in this section will be largely on the early years of schooling. There is a great need, however, for a return of the spirit that characterized high school and college educators of women in the 1930s. It has seemed to me that there is an insidious trend at this level of education toward discouraging women from aspiring to the most demanding and rewarding fields of work and thought. Dr. Mary Bunting, noteworthy for the imaginative Radcliffe Institute for Independent Study, now urges women to work on the "fringes" of the occupational system, away from the most competitive intellectual marketplaces. In her first public address upon assuming the presidency of Barnard college, Dr. Rosemary Park stated that in her view college education of women in the United States should have as its goal the creation of "enlightened laymen." High school and college counselors give hearty approval if women students show talent and interest in elementary school teaching, nursing, social work; their approval is all too often very lukewarm, if not discouraging, if women students show interest in physics, medicine, or law.

sees little of his father and knows next to nothing of what his father does away from home, there is some content to his image of men's work in the larger society. At least some part of his aggressive active play may be as much acting out similar male roles in response to the cultural cues provided by his environment as it is an overreaction to his feminine environment or an identification with an aggressor-father.

And what of the girl? What image of the female role is she acquiring during her early years? In her primary group environment, she sees women largely in roles defined in terms that relate to her as a child—as mother, aunt, grandmother, baby-sitter—or in roles relating to the house—the cleaning, cooking, mending activities of mother and domestic helpers. Many mothers work outside the home, but the daughter often knows as little of that work as she does of her father's. Even if her own mother works, the reasons for such working that are given to the child are most often couched in terms of the mother or housewife role. Thus, a girl is seldom told that her mother works because she enjoys it or finds it very important to her own satisfaction in life but because the money she earns will help pay for the house, a car, the daughter's clothes, dancing lessons, or school tuition.* In other words, working is something mothers sometimes have to do as mothers, not something mothers do as adult women. This is as misleading and distorted an image of the meaning of work as the father who tells his child he works "to take care of mummy and you" and neglects to mention that he also works because he finds personal satisfaction in doing so or that he is contributing to knowledge, peace, or the comfort of others in the society.

The young girl also learns that it is only in the family that women seem to have an important superordinate position. However high her father's occupational status outside the home, when he returns at

*Although her sample was upper-middle-class mothers of girls in progressive schools in New York City, Ruth Hartley reports that the working mothers in her sample told their children they were working out of the home because of financial need: "They express guilt about their working and appear to hold quite traditional concepts of appropriate 'feminine' behavior which they feel they are violating." An example is provided by a well-to-do working mother who obviously loves her work but told her daughter that she works because of financial necessity. When asked why she doesn't let her daughter know she enjoys her work, she answered, "Well, then what excuse would I have for working?" See Ruth Hartley and A. Klein, "Sex Role Concepts among Elementary-School-Age Girls," *Marriage and Family Living* 21 (February 1959):59-64.

night, he is likely to remove his white shirt and become a blue-collar Mr. Fixit or mother's helper. The traditional woman's self-esteem would be seriously threatened if her husband were to play a role equal to her own in the lives and affections of her children or in the creative or managerial aspect of home management, precisely because her major sphere in which to acquire the sense of personal worth is her home and children.* The lesson is surely not lost on her daughter, who learns that at home father does not know best, though outside the home men are the bosses over women, as she can see only too well in the nurse-doctor, secretary-boss, salesclerk-store manager, space Jane-space John relationships that she has an opportunity to observe.

The view that the socialization of the girl is an easy one compared with the boy depends on the kind of woman one has in mind as an end product of socialization. Only if the woman is to be the traditional wife-mother is present-day socialization of young girls adequate, for from this point of view the confinement to the kinds of feminine models noted above and the superordinate position of the mother in the family facilitate an easy identification. If a girl sees that women reign only at home or in a history book, whereas outside the home they are Girl Fridays to men, then clearly for many young girls the wife-mother role may appear the best possible goal to have. It should be noted, however, that identification has been viewed primarily as an either-or process—the child identifies either with the mother or the father—and not as a process in which there is a fusion of the two parent models such that identification involves a modeling of the self after mother in some respects, father in others. It is possible that those women who have led exciting, intellectually assertive, and creative lives did not identify exclusively with their traditional mothers, but crossed the sex line and looked to their fathers as model sources for ideas and life commitments of their own. This is to suggest that an exclusively same-sex identification between parent and child is no necessary condition for either mentally healthy or creative adults.

*Women enhance their own self-esteem when they urge their children to "be good when father gets home" because he is tired and needs to rest. They are not only portraying an image of the father as a fragile person, a "Dresden cup" as Irene Joselyn expresses it, but by expanding their maternalism to include the father, they are symbolically relegating him to the subordinate position of the child in the family structure. See Irene Joselyn, "Cultural Forces, Motherliness and Fatherliness," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 26 (1956):264-71.

If I am correct about the significance of the father in the childhoods of those women who later led creative adult lives, then an increased accessibility of the middle-class father to his daughters and greater sharing of his ideas and interests could help to counteract the narrow confines of the feminine models daughters have. Beyond this, young girls need exposure to female models in professional and scientific occupations and to women with drive and dedication who are playing innovative volunteer roles in community organizations; they need an encouragement to emulate them and a preparation for an equalitarian rather than a dominant role in parenthood. Only if a woman's self-esteem is rooted in an independent life outside her family as well as her roles within the home can she freely welcome her husband to share on an equal basis the most rewarding tasks involved in child rearing and home maintenance.

What happens when youngsters enter school? Instead of broadening the base on which they are forming their image of male and female roles, the school perpetuates the image children bring from home and their observations in the community. It has been mother who guided their preschool training; now in school it is almost exclusively women teachers who guide their first serious learning experiences. In the boy's first readers, men work at the same jobs with the same tools he has observed in his neighborhood—*T* for truck, *B* for bus, *W* for wagon. His teachers expect him to be rugged, physically strong, and aggressive. After a few years he moves into separate classes for gym, woodworking, and machine shop. For the girl, women are again the ones in charge of children. Her first readers portray women in aprons, brooms in their hands or babies in their arms. Teachers expect her to be quiet, dependent, with feminine interests in doll and house play and dressing up. In a few years she moves into separate classes for child care, cooking, and practical nursing. In excursions into the community, elementary school boys and girls visit airports, bus terminals, construction sites, factories, and farms.

What can the schools do to counteract these tendencies to either outmoded or traditional images of the roles of men and women? For one, class excursions into the community are no longer needed to introduce American children to building construction, airports, or zoos. Except for those in the most underprivileged areas of our cities, American children have ample exposure to such things with their car- and plane-riding families. There are, after all, only a limited number

of such excursions possible in the course of a school year. I think visits to a publishing house, research laboratory, computer firm, or art studio would be more enriching than airports and zoos.

Going out into the community in this way, youngsters would observe men and women in their present occupational distribution. By a program of bringing representatives of occupations into the classroom and auditorium, however, the school could broaden the spectrum of occupations young children may link to their own abilities and interests regardless of the present sex typing of occupations, by making a point of having children see and hear a woman scientist or doctor, a man dancer or artist, both women and men who are business executives, writers, and architects.*

Another way in which the elementary schools could help is making a concerted effort to attract male teachers to work in the lower grades. This would add a rare and important man to the primary group environment of both boys and girls. This might seem a forlorn hope to some, since elementary school teaching has been such a predominantly feminine field, and it may be harder to attract men to it than to attract women to fields presently considered masculine. It may well be that in the next decade or so the schools could not attract and keep such men as teachers. But it should be possible for graduate schools of education and also school systems to devise ways of incorporating more men teachers in the lower grades, either as part of their teacher training requirements or in the capacity of specialized teachers: the science, art, or music teacher who works with children at many grade levels rather than just one or two contiguous grade levels.[†] His presence in the lives of very young children could help

*In a large metropolis, resource persons could be invited through the city business and professional organizations, the Chamber of Commerce, art, music and dancing schools, etc. This could constitute a challenging program for PTA groups to handle; or a Community Resources Pool could be formed similar to that the New World Foundation has supported in New York City whereby people from business, the arts and sciences, and the professions work with the public schools. Many educators and teachers might hesitate to try such a project in anticipation of parent resistance. But parent resistance could be a good opportunity for parent education if teachers and school officials were firm and informed about what they were trying to do.

[†]Though predominantly a feminine field, there is one man to approximately every two women planning careers in teaching. In the "Great Aspirations" study, there were 11,388 women students planning to teach in elementary and secondary schools, but also 5038 men. The problem may therefore not be as great as it seems at first: schools of education could surely do more to encourage some of these men to work in the lower grades, in part or for part of their teaching careers.

dispel their expectation that only women are in charge of children, that nurturance is a female attribute, or that strength and an aggressive assault on the physical environment is the predominant attribute of man's work.

The suggestions made thus far relate to a change in the sex-linking of occupations. There is one crucial way in which the schools could effect a change in the traditional division of labor by sex within the family sphere. The claim that boys and girls are reared in their early years without any differentiation by sex is only partially true. There are classes in all elementary schools which boys and girls take separately or which are offered only to one sex. These are precisely the courses most directly relevant to adult family roles: courses in sex and family living (where communities are brave enough to hold them) are typically offered in separate classes for boys and for girls, or for girls only. Courses in shop and craft work are scheduled for boys only; courses in child care, nursing, and cooking are for girls only. In departing from completely coeducational programs, the schools are reinforcing the traditional division of labor by sex which most children observe in their homes. Fifteen years later, these girls find that they cannot fix a broken plug, set a furnace pilot light, or repair a broken high chair or favorite toy. These things await the return of the child's father and family handyman in the evening. When a child is sick in the middle of the night, his mother takes over; father is only her assistant or helper.

These may seem like minor matters, but I do not think they are. They unwittingly communicate to and reinforce in the child a rigid differentiation of role between men and women in family life. If first aid, the rudiments of child care and of cooking have no place in their early years as sons, brothers, and schoolboys, then it is little wonder that as husbands and fathers American men learn these things under their wives' tutelage. Even assuming these wives were actively involved in occupations of their own and hence free of the psychological pressure to assert their ascendancy in the family, it would be far better for all concerned—the married pair and the children as well—if men brought such skills with them to marriage.

This is the point where the schools could effect a change: if boys and girls took child care, nursing, cooking, shop, and craft classes together, they would have an opportunity to acquire comparable skills and pave the way for true parental substitutability as adults.

They would also be learning something about how to complement each other, not just how to compete with each other.* Teamwork should be taught in school in the subjects relevant to adult family roles, not just within each sex on the playground or in the gymnasium. In addition to encouraging more equality in the parental role, such preparation as school children could ease their adjustment to the crises of adult life; illness, separation due to the demands of a job or military service, divorce, or death would have far less trauma and panic for the one-parent family—whether mother or father—if such equivalence and substitutability were a part of the general definition of the parental role.

A school curriculum which brought boys and girls into the same classes and trained them in social poise, the healing skills, care of children, handling of interpersonal difficulties, and related subjects would also encourage the development of skills which are increasingly needed in our complex economy. Whether the adult job is to be that of a worker in an automated industry, a professional man in law, medicine, or scholarship, or an executive in a large bureaucratic organization, the skills which are needed are not physical strength and ruggedness in interpersonal combat but understanding in human dealings, social poise and persuasive skill in interpersonal relations.† All too often, neither the family nor the school encourages the development of these skills in boys. Hundreds of large business firms look for these qualities in young male applicants but often end up trying to develop them in their young executives through on-the-job training programs.

I have suggested a number of ways in which the educational system could serve as an important catalyst for change toward sex equality. The schools could reduce sex-role stereotypes of appropriate male and female attributes and activities by broadening the spectrum of occupations youngsters may consider for themselves irrespective of

*Bruno Bettelheim makes the point that American boys and girls learn to compete with each other, but not how to complement each other. He sees this lack of experience in complementarity as part of the difficulty in achieving a satisfactory sexual adjustment in marriage: the girl is used to "performing with males on equal grounds, but she has little sense of how to complement them. She cannot suddenly learn this in bed." See Bruno Bettelheim, "Growing Up Female," *Harper's* (November 1962):125.

†These are the same skills which, when found in women, go by the names of charm, tact, intuition. See Helen Mayer Hacker, "The New Burdens of Masculinity," *Marriage and Family Living* 19 (August 1957):227-33.

present sex-linked notions of man's work and woman's work, and by providing boys as well as girls with training in the tasks they will have as parents and spouses. The specific suggestions for achieving these ends which I have made should be viewed more as illustrative than as definitive, for educators themselves may have far better suggestions for how to implement the goal in the nation's classrooms than I have offered in these pages. Equality between the sexes cannot be achieved by proclamation or decree but only through a multitude of concrete steps, each of which may seem insignificant by itself, but all of which add up to the social blueprint for attaining the general goal.

SUMMARY PROFILE

In the course of this essay I have suggested a number of institutional innovations in education, residence, and child care which would facilitate equality between the sexes. Instead of a more conventional kind of summary, I shall describe a hypothetical case of a woman who is reared and lives out her life under the changed social conditions proposed in this essay.

She will be reared, as her brother will be reared, with a combination of loving warmth, firm discipline, household responsibility, and encouragement of independence and self-reliance. She will not be pampered and indulged, subtly taught to achieve her ends through coquetry and tears, as so many girls are taught today. She will view domestic skills as useful tools to acquire, some of which, like fine cooking or needlework, have their own intrinsic pleasures but most of which are necessary repetitive work best gotten done as quickly and efficiently as possible. She will be able to handle minor mechanical breakdowns in the home as well as her brother can, and he will be able to tend a child, press, sew, and cook with the same easy skills and comfortable feeling his sister has.

During their school years, both sister and brother will increasingly assume responsibility for their own decisions, freely experiment with numerous possible fields of study, gradually narrowing to a choice that best suits their interests and abilities rather than what is considered appropriate or prestigious work for men and women. They will be encouraged by parents and teachers alike to think ahead to a whole life span, viewing marriage and parenthood as one strand among many which will constitute their lives. The girl will not feel the

pressure to belittle her accomplishments, lower her aspirations, learn to be a receptive listener in her relations with boys, but will be as true to her growing sense of self as her brother and male friends are. She will not marry before her adolescence and schooling are completed, but will be willing and able to view the college years as a "moratorium" from deeply intense cross-sex commitments, a period of life during which her identity can be "at large and open and various."¹⁸ Her intellectual aggressiveness as well as her brother's tender sentiments will be welcomed and accepted as *human* characteristics, without the self-questioning doubt of latent homosexuality that troubles many college-age men and women in our era when these qualities are sex-linked.* She will not cling to her parents, nor they to her, but will establish an increasingly larger sphere of her own independent world in which she moves and works, loves and thinks, as a maturing young person. She will learn to take pleasure in her own body and a man's body and to view sex as a good and wonderful experience, but not as an exclusive basis for an ultimate commitment to another person, and not as a test of her competence as a female or her partner's competence as a male. Because she will have a many-faceted conception of her self and its worth, she will be free to merge and lose herself in the sex act with a lover or a husband.[†]

*David Riesman has observed that this latent fear of homosexuality haunts the Ivy League campuses, putting pressure on many young men to be guarded in their relations with each other and with their male teachers, reflecting in part the lag in the cultural image of appropriate sex characteristics. See David Riesman, "Permissiveness and Sex Roles," *Marriage and Family Living* 21 (August 1959):211-17.

[†]It goes beyond the intended scope of this essay to discuss the effects of a social pattern of equality between men and women upon their sexual relationship. A few words are, however, necessary, since the defenders of traditional sex roles often claim that full equality would so feminize men and masculinize women that satisfactory sexual adjustments would be impossible and homosexuality would probably increase. If the view of the sex act presupposes a dominant male actor and a passive female subject, then it is indeed the case that full sex equality would probably be the death knell of this traditional sexual relationship. Men and women who participate as equals in their parental and occupational and social roles will complement each other sexually in the same way, as essentially equal partners, and not as an ascendant male and a submissive female. This does not mean, however, that equality in nonsexual roles necessarily de-eroticizes the sexual one. The enlarged base of shared experience can, if anything, heighten the salience of sex qua sex. In Sweden, where men and women approach equality more than perhaps any other Western society, visitors are struck by the erotic atmosphere of that society. Sexually men and women do after all each lack what the other has and wishes for completion of the self; the salience of sex may be enhanced precisely in the situation of the diminished significance of sex as a differentiating factor in all other areas of life. It has always seemed paradoxical to me that so many psychoanalysts defend the traditional sex roles and warn that drastic warping of the sexual impulses may flow from full sex equality; surely they are underestimating the power and force of the very drive which is in so central a position in their

Marriage for our hypothetical woman will not mark a withdrawal from the life and work pattern that she has established, just as there will be no sharp discontinuity between her early childhood and youthful adult years. Marriage will be an enlargement of her life experiences, the addition of a new dimension to an already established pattern, rather than an abrupt withdrawal to the home and a turning in upon the marital relationship. Marriage will be a "looking outward in the same direction" for both the woman and her husband. She will marry and bear children only if she deeply desires a mate and children, and will not be judged a failure as a person if she decides against either. She will have few children if she does have them and will view her pregnancies, childbirth, and early months of motherhood as one among many equally important highlights in her life, experienced intensely and with joy but not as the exclusive basis for a sense of self-fulfillment and purpose in life. With planning and foresight, her early years of child bearing and rearing can fit a long-range view of all sides of herself. If her children are not to suffer from "paternal deprivation," her husband will also anticipate that the assumption of parenthood will involve a weeding out of non-essential activities either in work, civic, or social participation. Both the woman and the man will feel that unless a man can make room in his life for parenthood, he should not become a father. The woman will make sure, even if she remains at home during the infancy of her child, that he has ample experience of being with and cared for by other adults besides herself, so that her return to a full-time position in her field will not constitute a drastic change in the life of the child, but a gradual pattern of increasing supplementation by others of the mother. The children will have a less intense involvement with their mother, and she with them, and they will all be the better for it. When

theoretical framework. Maslow is one of the few psychologists who has explored the connections between sex experience and the conception of self among women. With a sample of 130 college-educated women in their twenties, he found, contrary to traditional notions of femininity and psychoanalytic theories, that the more "dominant" the woman, the greater her enjoyment of sexuality, the greater her ability to give herself freely in love. Women with dominance feelings were free to be completely themselves, and this was crucial for their full expression in sex. They were not feminine in the traditional sense, but enjoyed sexual fulfillment to a much greater degree than the conventionally feminine women he studied. See A. H. Maslow, "Dominance, Personality and Social Behavior in Women," *Journal of Social Psychology* 10 (1939):3-39; and "Self-Esteem (Dominance Feeling) and Sexuality in Women," *Journal of Social Psychology* 16 (1942):259-94; or a review of Maslow's studies in Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, 316-26.

they are grown and establish adult lives of their own, our woman will face no retirement twenty years before her husband, for her own independent activities will continue and expand. She will be neither an embittered wife, an interfering mother-in-law, nor an idle parasite, but together with her husband she will be able to live an independent, purposeful, and satisfying third act in life.

ENDNOTES

I wish to express my gratitude to Peter H. Rossi for his critical assessment of several drafts of this essay; to the Social Science Research Committee at the University of Chicago for a research grant that supported part of the research on which this essay is based; and to Stephen R. Graubard for his generosity of time and editorial skill.

¹Cowles and Dietz, Myrdal and Klein, and Jean Warren have shown that there has been very little change in the past quarter century in the total working time per week devoted to homemaking activities. May L. Cowles and Ruth P. Dietz, "Time Spent in Homemaking Activities by a Selected Group of Wisconsin Farm Homemakers," *Journal of Home Economics* 48 (January 1956):29-35; Jean Warren, "Time: Resource or Utility," *Journal of Home Economics* 49 (January 1957):21ff.; Alva Myrdal and Viola Klein, *Women's Two Roles: Home and Work* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1956).

²Benjamin Spock, "Should Mothers Work?" *Ladies' Home Journal* (February 1963).

³See Anna Freud and Dorothy T. Burlingham, *Infants Without Families* (New York: International University Press, 1944); William Goldfarb, "Psychological Deprivation in Infancy and Subsequent Adjustment," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 15 (April 1945):247-55; John Bowlby, *Maternal Care and Mental Health* (Geneva: World Health Organization, 1952); John Bowlby, *Child-Care and the Growth of Love* (London: Pelican Books, 1953); and James Bossard, *The Sociology of Child Development* (New York: Harper, 1954).

⁴Burchinal and Rossman found no significant relationships between any kind of employment and personality characteristics or social interaction of children in the seventh and eleventh grades in school—Lee C. Burchinal and Jack E. Rossman, "Relations among Maternal Employment Indices and Developmental Characteristics of Children," *Marriage and Family Living* 23 (November 1961):334-40. Nye administered questionnaires to over two thousand high school students and found no significant relationships between maternal employment and educational achievement or neurotic symptoms—F. Ivan Nye, "Employment Status of Mothers and Adjustment of Adolescent Children," *Marriage and Family Living* 21 (August 1959):240-44. Using scales to tap nervous symptoms, and social and withdrawing tendencies, Perry found no significant differences between children with working and nonworking mothers—Joseph B. Perry, "The Mother Substitutes of Employed Mothers: An Exploratory Inquiry," *Marriage and Family Living* 23 (November 1961):362-67. Kligler found that employed mothers reported their maternal role suffered least from their occupations—Deborah S. Kligler, "The Effects of the Employment of Married Women on Husband and

Wife Roles," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Sociology, Yale University, 1954. Roy found no consistent effects of maternal employment on the social life and participation of children or their academic performance, or the affection, fairness of discipline, and cooperation in the family—Prodipto Roy, "Maternal Employment and Adolescent Roles: Rural-Urban Differentials," *Marriage and Family Living* 23 (November 1961):340–49. Peterson found no significant differences on employment of mothers and maternal interest in and supervision of their adolescent daughters—Evan T. Peterson, "The Impact of Maternal Employment on the Mother-Daughter Relationship," *Marriage and Family Living* 23 (November 1961):355–61. In Eleanor Maccoby's reanalysis of data from the Gluecks' study of working mothers and delinquency, she shows that working or not working has little effect once the quality of child care is taken into account—Eleanor Maccoby, "Effects Upon Children of their Mothers' Outside Employment," in National Manpower Council, *Work in the Lives of Married Women* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958):150–72. General reviews of the literature are found in: Lois M. Stolz, "Effects of Maternal Employment on Children: Evidence from Research," *Child Development* 31 (December 1960):749–82; Eli Ginzberg, ed., *The Nation's Children*, vol. 3, *Problems and Prospects* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960) in the chapter by Henry David "Work, Women and Children," 180–98; and Elizabeth Herzog, *Children of Working Mothers* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Children's Bureau Publication #382, 1960); and most recently, a volume of research papers on the employed mother by F. Ivan Nye and Lois W. Hoffman, *The Employed Mother in America* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1963).

⁵Marian Radke Yarrow, Phyllis Scott, Louise de Leeuw, and Christine Heinig, "Child-rearing in Families of Working and Non-Working Mothers," *Sociometry* 25 (June 1962):122–40.

⁶Only in recent years has there been a shift in the discussion and research on maternal employment: investigators have begun to explore the positive effects of maternal employment. For example, Urie Bronfenbrenner has suggested that employed mothers may have a positive effect upon adolescent children by giving them a chance to develop responsibility for their own behavior—Urie Bronfenbrenner, "Family Structure and Personality Development: Report of Progress," mimeograph (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University, Department of Child Development and Family Relationships, 1958.) Ruth Hartley has suggested that the working mother may have "stretching effects" upon a child's perceptions and social concepts—Ruth E. Hartley, "What Aspects of Child Behavior Should be Studied in Relation to Maternal Employment," *Research Issues Related to the Effects of Maternal Employment on Children* (New York: Social Science Research Center, The Pennsylvania State University, 1961), 48.

⁷A. I. Rabin, "Infants and Children under Conditions of 'Intermittent' Mothering in the Kibbutz," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 28 (1958):577–84; Rabin, "Personality Maturity of Kibbutz and Non-Kibbutz Children as Reflected in Rorschach Findings," *Journal of Projective Techniques* 21 (1957):148–53; Rabin, "Attitudes of Kibbutz Children to Family and Parents," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 29 (1959):172–79; Rabin, "Some Psychosexual Differences between Kibbutz and Non-Kibbutz Israeli Boys," *Journal of Projective Techniques* 22 (1958):328–32; H. Faigin, "Social Behavior of Young Children in the Kibbutz," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 56 (1958):117–29. A

good overview of these studies can be found in David Rapaport, "The Study of Kibbutz Education and its Bearing on the Theory of Development," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 28 (1958):587-99.

⁸This passivity and softness in American young people has been noted in the following works: David Riesman, Introduction to Edgar Friedenberg, *The Vanishing Adolescent* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959); Paul Goodman, *Growing Up Absurd* (New York: Random House, 1960); Majorie K. McCorquodale, "What They Will Die for in Houston," *Harper's* (October 1961); *Youth: Change and Challenge, Daedalus* (Winter 1962). The White House attempt in recent years to revitalize physical education has been in part a response to the distressing signs of muscular deterioration and physical passivity of American youth.

⁹Edward A. Strecker, *Their Mothers' Sons* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1946).

¹⁰Friedenberg, *The Vanishing Adolescent*.

¹¹Numerous authors have analyzed the effect of women's focus on their children as their chief achievement: John Spiegel, "New Perspectives in the Study of the Family," *Marriage and Family Living* 16 (February 1954):4-12; Bruno Bettelheim, "Growing Up Female," *Harper's* (October 1962). The effects of such exclusive maternal focus on children upon relations with married couples are shown in: Marvin Sussman, "Family Continuity: Selective Factors which Affect Relationships between Families at Generational Levels," *Marriage and Family Living* 16 (May 1954):112-30; Paul Wallin, "Sex Differences in Attitudes toward In-Laws," *American Journal of Sociology* 59 (1954):466-69; Harvey Locke, *Predicting Adjustment in Marriage* (New York: Holt, 1951); Evelyn M. Duvall, *In-Laws: Pro and Con* (New York: Associated Press, 1954); and Frances Jerome Woods, *The American Family System* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959), 265-66. These authors discuss the strains with mothers-in-law stemming from too exclusive a focus of women on their children and their subsequent difficulty in "releasing" their children when they are grown.

¹²See Margaret Cussler's profile of the "volunteer executive" in her study *The Woman Executive* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1958), 111-18.

¹³Myrdal and Klein, *Women's Two Roles: Home and Work*, 33-64; National Manpower Council, *Womanpower* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1957); Florence Kluckhohn, *The American Family: Past and Present and America's Women* (Chicago: The Delphian Society, 1952), 116; and Rose Goldsen et al., *What College Students Think* (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand, 1960), 46-59, 81-96.

¹⁴Florence Kluckhohn, "Variations in Basic Values of Family Systems," in Norman W. Bell and Ezra F. Vogel, *A Modern Introduction to the Family* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1960), 304-16; and George Gallup and Evan Hill, "The American Woman," *The Saturday Evening Post* (December 22, 1962):15-32.

¹⁵Talcott Parsons, *Essays in Sociological Theory Pure and Applied* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1949), 222-24, 243-46.

¹⁶Henry C. Lajewski, *Child Care Arrangements of Full-Time Working Mothers* (Washington, D. C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Children's Bureau Publication No. 378, 1959); and Herzog, *Children of Working Mothers*.

¹⁷William Whyte, *Organization Man* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1956); Robert Wood, *Suburbia, Its People and Their Politics* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1959); John Keats, *The Crack in the Picture Window* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1956); A. C. Spector, *The Exurbanites* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1955);

and Nanette E. Scofield, "Some Changing Roles of Women in Suburbia: A Social Anthropological Case Study," *Transactions of the New York Academy of Sciences* 22 (April 1960):6.

¹⁸Erik Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1950).

Religion and Education

Dædalus

Spring 1988

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John Maynard Smith

Eugenics and Utopia

THERE IS NO FIELD OF APPLICATION OF SCIENCE to human affairs more calculated to arouse our prejudices than eugenics. I cannot hope to be free from these prejudices, but in this essay I will try to separate what we ought to do from what we can now do and from what we may in the future be able to do. These problems should be thought about because our ability to alter the future course of human evolution is likely to increase dramatically during the next hundred years.

There are three ways in which we may be able to alter man's biological capacities, which I shall call selectionist eugenics, transformationist eugenics, and biological engineering. Briefly, selectionist eugenics is the application to ourselves of the techniques which, since the Neolithic revolution, we have been applying in the breeding of our domestic animals and plants. In effect, we take measures to ensure that individuals with characteristics we like will contribute more to future generations than individuals with characteristics we dislike. These measures range from the simple to the sophisticated, from the slaughter of runts to the cold storage of spermatozoa for artificial insemination. The development of a science of population genetics has enabled us to estimate with greater accuracy the consequence of any particular interference with the breeding system and to choose between effective and ineffective methods of selection. But it has not altered the fact that this is an extremely slow and inefficient method of altering the genetic properties of a population and one

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whose speed can be increased only by increasing the intensity of selection; a bigger change is produced in the properties of the next generation if 99 percent of the males in the present one are selectively slaughtered or sterilized than if 1 percent are so treated.

Recent advances in molecular genetics have raised the possibility of a different and far more effective method of genetic change which I shall call transformationist eugenics. At present, if we wish to eliminate an undesirable gene from a population, our only method of doing so is to reduce the breeding chances of those individuals carrying the gene; but now that we know something of the chemistry of heredity, it is possible to think of the direct alteration or transformation of particular genes. Today, this can be done only in micro-organisms, and then in only a very small proportion of the cells exposed to the transforming agent. But it will be surprising if direct gene transformation does not become possible in man and higher animals during the next hundred years. If so, it will increase by many orders of magnitude the speed and economy with which the genetic properties of populations can be changed.

Finally, the continued development of surgical techniques, together with chemical methods of altering development and with tissue and organ culture, will make it possible to produce quite profound alterations in the biological properties of individuals without altering their genetic constitution. This I shall call biological engineering.

Before discussing in greater detail the technical and ethical considerations raised by these methods, there is one general point to be made: man is evolving anyway. That is to say, changes are taking place in the genetic properties of the human population whether we like it or not; and almost every political and social measure we take influences to some degree the nature and direction of these changes.¹ Probably the most important changes at the present time are due not to selective survival or fertility but to changes in the breeding structure consequent on increased population size and increased mobility. At one extreme is the reduction in the frequency of marriages between close relatives, which is likely at least in the short term (that is, for some hundreds of years) to have beneficial effects by reducing the frequency of diseases caused by recessive genes; at the other extreme is the increase in the frequency of interracial marriage, although social pressures have both minimized this change and rendered it almost impossible to evaluate its consequences accurately.

But in the literature of eugenics, more attention has been paid to selective effects, and in particular to the differential fertility of social classes and the consequences of improved medical care. The importance of the former subject has probably been exaggerated—the observed differences may not last long enough to have significant evolutionary consequences—but it is comforting in any case that measurements of IQ in 1932 and 1947 in Scotland showed a slight but significant rise on the second occasion although the negative correlation between the IQ score of children and the size of the family to which they belonged had led to the prediction that the mean IQ of the population must decline. Even if, as seems likely, the observed rise was the result of particular environmental rather than genetic factors, at least no measurable genetic decline has occurred.²

The effects of improved medical services should perhaps be taken more seriously because these are likely to be long lasting. The argument is as follows. Improved medical and social care make it possible for people who in the past would have died to survive and have children. Insofar as their defects were genetically determined, they are likely to be handed on to their children. Consequently, the frequency of genetically determined defects in the population is likely to increase; and an increasingly large proportion of the population will be engaged in keeping the rest alive. I think we have to accept the fact that there is some truth in this argument, but it is a little difficult to see what we should do about it. To ban the manufacture of glasses and the administration of insulin because these activities permit astigmatics and diabetics to breed seems inhumane. If we are going to administer insulin, there is no rational ground for refusing to undertake the more expensive and time-consuming job of feeding babies who suffer from a genetically determined form of mental defect known as phenylketonuria on a diet free of phenylalanine. And as our knowledge increases, the number of tasks of this kind which we shall feel obliged to undertake will increase. An extreme eugenicist might suggest that although we should not ban the administration of insulin, we should insist on the sterilization of those who require it. The difficulty with such a policy is that almost every human being possesses at least some characteristics, physical, moral, or intellectual, which we would prefer not to be transmitted to the next generation. The only humane answer at present appears to be that an increasing investment in medical and social care is a price we should be prepared to pay.

But there are two mitigating circumstances. First, as I shall discuss later, there may be a long-term way out of this dilemma. Second, not all the genetic consequences of improved medical services are dysgenic, and it may even be that most are not. To see why this is so, consider the case of malaria and sickle cell anemia. Briefly, there exists in man a gene S, which in homozygous* condition causes fatal anemia. Yet this gene occurs in high frequency in certain places, particularly in parts of Africa where malaria is or was until recently a common cause of death. The reason for this distribution is that individuals heterozygous for the gene S are resistant to malaria. The frequency of S in Negroes of West African origin now resident in America is lower than in those in West Africa, presumably because in the absence of malaria natural selection against homozygotes has not been balanced by selection in favor of heterozygotes; a similar decrease in frequency of S is likely to occur in Africa as malaria is brought under control. This is an evolutionary change consequent on improved medical care (that is, the eradication of malaria), but it is a desirable change since it has reduced the number of children dying of anemia.

The case of sickle cell anemia and malaria is rather a special one, but beneficial evolutionary consequences of improved medical care may be quite common. The greatest change so far produced by medicine (more particularly by preventive medicine) on the pattern of mortality is the reduction in the number of people dying of infectious disease. This has led to a reduction in the selection pressure in favor of disease resistance and presumably to an increase in susceptibility. As long as we continue to control infectious disease by improved hygiene, inoculation, and so forth, this is probably a good thing. The reason for this is that in evolution, as in other fields, one seldom gets something for nothing. Genes which confer disease resistance are likely to have harmful effects in other ways; this is certainly true of the gene for sickle cell anemia and may be a general rule. If so, absence of selection in favor of disease resistance may be eugenic.

Now that death from infectious disease is rare in industrial countries, the main efforts in medical research are concentrated on diseases such as cancer and rheumatism, which usually affect older

* An individual who inherits the same gene, defective or otherwise, from both parents is said to be homozygous; an individual inheriting different genes from his two parents is said to be heterozygous.

people. Cures for cancer (other than leukemia) would not have significant genetic consequences because, although they would prolong the life of many people, they would seldom add to the number of children born to such people. The main dysgenic effects of medical progress arise from cures of defects which are present at birth or appear before reproductive age, and in whose causation there is a genetic component.

So far, I have considered genetic changes which are happening or are likely to happen as unintended by-products of measures undertaken with other ends in view. I now turn to the possible effects of intentional eugenic measures, first considering measures of selective eugenics which either are already technically possible or are fairly certain to become possible in the near future. Such eugenic measures can be "negative," that is, concerned with the elimination or reduction in frequency of undesirable traits, or "positive," that is concerned with improving the average performance, or the proportion of individuals capable of outstanding performance, of socially desirable tasks.

The probable effectiveness of negative eugenic measures depends first on whether the characteristic in question is genetically determined and, if so, whether it is caused by a dominant* or a recessive gene. For characters caused by dominant genes, negative eugenic measures could be effective but are usually pointless; for characters caused by recessive genes, they are ineffective.³

Consider first a character, achondroplasia (dwarfism with short legs and arms), which is caused by a dominant gene. Since the gene is dominant, we can recognize all carriers of the gene. If we so wished, we could by sterilizing all achondroplastic dwarfs prevent any carriers from passing the gene on to the next generation. This would not completely eliminate the character from the population but would reduce its frequency to the number of cases arising by new mutation in each generation. But why should we wish to do this, since there is little to prevent an achondroplastic dwarf from leading a contented and useful life? If a dominant mutation is lethal or seriously disabling, selection will keep it at a frequency close to the mutation rate without our intervention; if it is not disabling, why

*A dominant gene is one which produces an effect in single dose, being inherited from one parent only; a recessive gene has no effect unless inherited from both parents, or at least has no serious effect.

should we interfere? Unhappily, there are exceptions to this easy excuse for inactivity. An example is Huntingdon's chorea, which is due to a dominant gene which does not manifest itself until middle life, after the affected person has had children. The condition differs from achondroplasia in being fatal and very distressing for the sufferer. Additional distress arises if relatives of affected persons foresee, correctly, that they may develop the disease. In such a case, there are good grounds for discouraging any person with even one parent or sibling who has developed the disease from having children. I am satisfied that such people should be encouraged to undergo sterilization but doubt that sterilization should be compulsory; the case for compulsory sterilization will be stronger when we learn to recognize heterozygotes before the disease develops.⁴

Now consider a disease such as phenylketonuria, which is due to a gene which is recessive in the sense that only homozygotes suffer from the associated mental defect.⁵ Approximately one person in 60,000 in Britain is homozygous for the gene; it follows that one person in 122 is a carrier.⁶ Consequently, if we could not recognize the heterozygotes, then the sterilization of homozygotes (in fact, untreated homozygotes normally do not get married or have children) would remove only 1/245 of the mutant genes per generation. Eugenic measures would therefore be ineffective unless applied to heterozygotes, who can in this case be recognized biochemically although they are not mentally defective. But it seems likely that most people are carriers of at least one lethal or deleterious gene, although they cannot at present be recognized as such. It follows that as our ability to recognize heterozygotes increases, we could be led to sterilize almost the whole population on eugenic grounds, which is clearly absurd.

The ability to recognize heterozygotes for such conditions as phenylketonuria makes it possible in principle to eliminate the affected homozygotes by preventing marriage between heterozygotes. (The statement in the previous paragraph that almost everyone is heterozygous for something does not invalidate this conclusion: all that has to be avoided is marriage between two people heterozygous for the *same* gene; and this would rule out only a small fraction of possible marriages.) It is admittedly difficult to see how this can be achieved, but a start might be made by testing relatives of affected persons and partners in prospective marriages between cousins. There is also a sense in which such a measure would be dysgenic. By

preventing the birth of affected individuals, it would remove any selection against the mutant gene; and this would lead to an increase in its frequency in the population.⁷ To this extent, preventing marriages between heterozygotes could have dysgenic effects similar to the cure of a genetically determined disease.

In earlier discussions of eugenics, suggested measures of positive eugenics took the form of legislation designed to encourage particular classes of persons to have more children. Two examples of such suggestions are increased family allowances for university teachers and a tax on children, the logic behind the latter suggestion being that only the rich would be able to afford children and that wealth is at least an approximate measure of genetic worth.⁸ But in recent years increasing attention has been paid to the possibility of artificial insemination. H. J. Muller⁹ and, more recently, Julian Huxley¹⁰ have suggested that we should try to persuade married women who have had one child by their husbands to have a second child by a donor of their choice. In view of the sources from which it emanates, if for no other reason, this suggestion merits careful examination.

First, how effective would such a measure be? I shall discuss the effects on a single metrical character; to be concrete I shall consider IQ score, since intelligence is the quality most usually prized by people in academic circles who propose eugenic measures. I shall make the following assumptions, which appear to be optimistic:

1. Among women, 1 percent could be persuaded on eugenic grounds to have half their children by artificial insemination.
2. The husbands of such women would be a random sample of the population.
3. The mean IQ of the donors chosen would be one standard deviation above the population average. (Without intending to be either facetious or offensive, it is fair to ask what would be the relative popularities of Francis Crick and Ringo Starr.)
4. The realized heritability* of IQ scores is 0.5.

*The realized heritability is defined as the progress under selection divided by the selection differential; that is to say, in the case of IQ score, it is the increase in the mean IQ score in a generation divided by the difference between the mean IQ of the selected parents and that of the population from which they were selected. The realized heritability normally lies between 0 and 1, and the value of 0.5 is fairly typical for a metrical character.

Given these assumptions, the mean IQ score of the next generation (allowing thirty years per generation) would be approximately 0.04 points higher than it would otherwise be. Compared with the rise of approximately two points observed in fifteen years in Scotland—which probably resulted from such things as the spread of radio and television sets—I doubt whether such a rise would be worth the trouble.

Artificial insemination would be less effective in man than in domestic animals because a number of conditions can be satisfied in the latter case but not in the former. These conditions are:

1. It is possible to define the objective of selection—for example, growth rate or milk yield—and to accept deterioration in other characteristics—for example, mobility or intelligence.
2. It is possible to choose the male donors on the basis of this objective and to use progeny testing to ensure that the donors pass the appropriate characters on to their children.
3. It is possible to ensure that most females have most of their offspring by artificial insemination.

I assumed above that only 1 percent of women could be persuaded to accept artificial insemination on eugenic grounds. Clearly, the effectiveness of the procedure would be increased if the proportion of women participating were greater. There have been societies in the past in which a large proportion of the women have been persuaded or coerced into a breeding system which had genetic consequences similar to the scheme suggested by Muller and Huxley. For example, among the Nambikuave Indians of central Brazil, a chieftain, nominated by his predecessor but dependent on popular consent, is the only member of the group to have a number of wives.¹¹ Although this practice does not seem to have been undertaken for genetic reasons, it cannot fail to have genetic consequences.

I do not believe that a larger proportion of the world's population will ever adopt such a system, using either artificial or natural insemination, but this belief may only reveal my prejudices. But it does seem possible that a small racial or religious group might adopt such a practice. If such a group could maintain a fair degree of genetic isolation from the rest of the population and if the great majority of women in the group bore at least one child by a donor of high IQ (the

argument, of course, will apply to any character), then after a century the mean IQ of the group might have risen by one standard deviation, or fifteen points. In other words, a group might arise with an average intelligence similar to that of a group of students selected for a university. This seems hardly sufficient to justify the establishment of a new religion.

But what if artificial selection were continued not for a century but for a millennium? It is unlikely that the mean IQ would rise by ten standard deviations. Experience shows that if intense artificial selection for a single character is continued for a number of generations, the genetic response, although rapid at first, tends to slow down and even to stop. It is impossible to predict at what level this "plateau" will be reached.¹² But it seems quite likely that if a human community were to practice artificial selection for intelligence for a thousand years, there would be a rise of several standard deviations in the mean IQ, and the community might contain several individuals with mental capacities greater than those of anyone alive today.

But as an estimate of what would happen if, for example, a number of groups such as the American Academy of Arts and Sciences were to campaign for artificial insemination on eugenic grounds, a rise of 0.04 points per generation seems optimistic. Nevertheless, it has been argued that artificial insemination is valuable in man because a small rise in mean score would produce a disproportionate increase in the number of people with exceptionally high scores. Thus, if it is assumed that IQ score is normally distributed and that a small change in mean IQ score does not alter the variance of the score (this need not be true, but it might very well be true),¹³ then an increase of one point in mean IQ would be accompanied by an increase of 20 percent in the proportion of people with IQ's above 175. It is argued that although an increase of one point in the mean IQ might not be worth bothering about, an increase of 20 percent in the number of geniuses is well worth striving for.

The argument is weakened by the fact that IQ score is not normally distributed; there are many more people with very high and very low scores than would be predicted on the assumption of normality.¹⁴ Thus, if the distribution were normal, an increase of mean IQ of one point would lead to an increase in the proportion of people with a score greater than 175 from 3.3 per million to 4 per million. But since

the distribution is not normal, the actual increase would be approximately from 77 per million to 85 per million.

But the main weakness of the argument lies in the assumption that an increase in the proportion of people with IQ scores above 175 would necessarily, or even probably, be associated with an increase in the number of people of outstanding ability as judged by their achievements. If this were so, it is difficult to explain why some quite small populations, for example Periclean Athens, should in a short time have produced such a number of people who, judged by their achievements, were of outstanding ability, whereas other larger populations, such as Greece during the Byzantine empire, should have produced hardly any. This is not to imply that outstanding achievements do not require unusual genetic endowments or that anyone could have written the *Principia* if he had had Newton's opportunities. What is suggested by a comparison of Greece in Classical and in Byzantine times is that any reasonably large population is likely to contain people genetically capable of outstanding achievements if social conditions are favorable. The same point is made perhaps more convincingly by referring to the frequent occurrence of simultaneous yet independent discoveries in science. It follows that a small increase in the proportion of people with IQ scores above 175 is unlikely to be important.

So far, I have accepted the four assumptions listed above as reasonable approximations. But one of the assumptions—that the husbands of women accepting artificial insemination would be a random sample—is manifestly false for two reasons. First, women accepting artificial insemination on eugenic grounds would hardly be a random sample; and, since mating in man, for intellectual and moral characteristics at least, is not random, their husbands would be likely to resemble them. Second, if the husbands agreed—and the results if they did not would hardly be desirable—they would presumably be above average in humility and unselfishness. It is at least possible to argue that these qualities are more desirable socially than the qualities for which the donors would be chosen. If so, the measure, insofar as it had any effects, would be likely to be dysgenic.

This raises the major difficulty of all suggested measures of positive eugenics, the problem of deciding what we want. It is fairly easy to recognize characteristics—blindness, mental defect, lameness—which we would wish to avoid in our own and in other peoples' children but

much more difficult to define characters we wish to encourage, particularly when it is remembered that these characters may be mutually incompatible. Most experience with artificial selection in animals leads to the conclusion that selection in favor of a particular character—for instance, milk yield in cattle or the number of bristles in *Drosophila*—is effective in altering the selected characters in the desired direction; but the alteration is accompanied by changes in many other characters, changes whose nature cannot be predicted in detail but which are usually undesirable in that they lower fertility or the probability of survival, or impair performance in other ways.¹⁵ This is only a restatement of the point made above when discussing disease resistance, that you rarely get something for nothing. It is a point usually forgotten in discussions of eugenics.

Two other points should be made concerning the problem of deciding what characteristics are desirable. First, it is probable that in man at least some desirable characteristics arise in genetic heterozygotes; if so, it is unreasonable to expect them to breed true. Second, it is far from clear that what we want is a genetically uniform population; indeed, societies seem much more likely to be workable if they contain individuals with a wide range of genetic capabilities.¹⁶

If our objective is to increase the proportion of genetically gifted people in the population, there is a method which is likely to become feasible in the fairly near future and which would be considerably more effective than artificial insemination. This is to make clonal “copies” of successful people. It has already proved possible to remove the nucleus from a fertilized frog egg and to replace it with the nucleus from one of the cells of a developing embryo; the egg then develops into a frog having the genetic characteristics of the embryo from which the nucleus was taken.¹⁷ It will perhaps soon be possible to remove a fertilized or unfertilized human egg from the oviduct, remove the nucleus, and replace it with a nucleus from, let us say, a germ-line cell of some individual whose genotype we would like to reproduce. Implanted in a uterus, this egg would then develop the same genetically determined characteristics as those of the individual from which the nucleus was taken.

Leaving aside for the moment the desirability of such a “cloning” technique, let us turn to why it would be more effective than artificial insemination. In artificial insemination, only half the genes of the donor are transmitted. Therefore, their effects may be “diluted out”

by the genes of the mother; and if the peculiar and desired characteristics of the donor depended on interactions between genes, these are likely to be lost. But in the cloning technique, an exact genetic replica, as in monovular twins, would be obtained.

How strong are the arguments for adopting this measure, supposing that it does become practicable? I do not want to be dogmatic on this point, but two arguments against it should be mentioned. First, the arguments outlined above for believing that human populations have an adequate supply of talented people to meet the problems of the time would, if accepted, show that there is little to be gained by adopting the cloning technique. Second, people "conceived" in this way could have severe and perhaps crippling psychological difficulties. Sons of famous fathers not infrequently suffer because too much is expected of them; much more might be expected of children known to be genetically identical to a famous "ancestor."

I now turn from selectionist to transformationist eugenics, from what we can do to what we may be able to do in the future. I want again to consider the case of sickle cell anemia, although there is a risk that this condition may come to play the same distorting role in evolutionary speculation today that the neck of the giraffe did in the last century. It is known that a person homozygous for the gene S differs from normal people because the hemoglobin in their red blood cells is insoluble and that this difference is due to the substitution of the amino acid valine for glutamic acid at a particular position in the β chain of their hemoglobin. It is reasonably certain that this abnormality is due to the presence of a single abnormal base in a DNA molecule in the chromosomes of blood-forming cells and that this, in turn, is due to the presence of a single abnormal base in a DNA molecule in the fertilized egg from which they developed (strictly speaking, there must have been four abnormal bases, since there were two homologous sets of chromosomes in the egg, each containing an abnormal base pair). When the details of the genetic code have been discovered, which is likely to be soon, it may be possible to specify which base has been substituted for which—for example, that adenine has replaced cytosine at a particular place.

People heterozygous for the gene S can be recognized, since their red blood cells contain about 40 percent of the insoluble hemoglobin and about 60 percent of normal. A baby suffering from sickle cell anemia will be born only if two heterozygotes marry (except for new

mutation or illegitimacy). As was pointed out earlier, the birth of anemic babies could be avoided by preventing the marriage of heterozygotes. It could also be prevented if it proved possible to transform a single base—say adenine to cytosine—in the sperm cells of the father, or in the oocytes of the mother, or in the fertilized egg. This would be an example of negative transformationist eugenics. It would have the immediate effect of preventing the birth of defective children without making it necessary to interfere with the choice of marriage partners and without having the dysgenic effect of causing a gradual increase in the frequency of deleterious genes.

Of the various methods of eugenics which have been or will be discussed in the essay, there seems little doubt that negative transformationist eugenics would be the most desirable. It would require the minimum interference with who marries or has children by whom; its effects would be confined to the limited and generally acceptable objective of preventing the birth of children with specific defects; and, far from having dysgenic effects, transformationist eugenics could provide a means of counteracting the long-term dysgenic effects of some types of medical care.

The drawback, of course, is that such methods are not at present practicable; and it is not yet possible to see how such transformation could be achieved. The major difficulty is the restricted nature of the transformation required. Thus a chemical procedure which transformed all or many of the adenine molecules in a nucleus into cytosine would certainly be fatal; instead, only one particular adenine molecule among the hundreds of thousands present must be transformed. Because of two properties of nucleic acid, namely, homologous pairing and recombination, the problem is not quite so hopeless as it sounds. The first of these two properties makes the following situation possible: if a normal "gene" (DNA molecule) for hemoglobin could be introduced into a cell carrying the mutant S gene, this normal molecule might pair base by base with the abnormal one. The second property raises the possibility that in some circumstances the normal molecule might replace the abnormal one in the chromosome. Something of this kind does occur in the phenomenon of bacterial transformation; unfortunately, it is now confined to bacterial cells, which are much readier to accept nucleic acid molecules than are animal cells, and even then it is possible to transform only a small proportion of the cells exposed to transforming nucleic acid. I

find it impossible to say how much my conviction that transformation will become a practicable eugenic tool arises because the wish is father to the thought; but at least it seems rational for the next hundred years or so to attempt to cure or to make life possible for people with congenital diseases without worrying too much about the ultimate dysgenic effects.

Transformationist eugenics has its most obvious area of application in the negative field, in altering genes which give rise to obvious and gross deficiencies. It is possible to visualize positive application in animal breeding; if, for example, resistance to a particular disease, or ability to digest a particular food, could be shown to depend on the presence of a particular enzyme, then a gene determining that enzyme might be incorporated into the genotype of a domestic species. But the major application of transformationist genetics is likely to be in producing genetically changed microorganisms designed to play particular roles in the manufacture of food and of other complicated chemical substances. It is more difficult to see positive applications to man. The production of individuals of outstanding intelligence will again be taken as an example, although even greater difficulties would arise if the characters chosen were, for instance, artistic ability or moral worth. The difficulty is simply stated: we do not know what changes in the egg's ability to synthesize specific proteins would lead to increased intelligence in the adult developing from the egg; therefore, even if we knew how to bring about specific gene transformations, we would not know what transformations to make. There is no reason to think that the problem is insoluble, but it would appear to be much further from solution than the problem of genetic transformation itself.

This brings me to the third technique available for the alteration of man's nature, that of biological engineering.¹⁸ Here I have in mind the extension of existing medical techniques from the negative to the positive field. Today it is standard practice to attempt to cure many congenital defects by surgical or medical techniques, and there is no reason to doubt that treatment of congenital disease will be supplemented or replaced in the future by methods of treating the fetus so that the developmental process is altered and a normal child is born. But at this moment we do not use or contemplate using such techniques to produce outstanding individuals. For example, it would perhaps be technically possible through surgery to produce a man

whose legs were so lengthened that he could run a mile in three and a half minutes. But, sensibly enough, we prefer to let nature take its course and manufacture motor cars and airplanes if we want to move fast. But we do not hesitate to cure a lame child if we can.

It seems, then, that our present practice depends on a concept of normality, however difficult that may be to define. Since we are concerned here with a problem of what we ought to do rather than what is technically feasible, it is perhaps best to regard a characteristic as abnormal if it leads to a loss of function sufficient to cause its possessor to be unhappy. But we should ask also if there are circumstances in which we might wish to produce outstanding individuals. In the field of physical performance this seems unlikely, since it will always be easier to build a machine. There is, however, one exception: we cannot build machines to make us live longer. It is not at present possible to say whether we shall ever be able to produce a large increase in human life expectancy, even though we can already ensure that a larger proportion of people survive to old age. We do not at present know whether senescence is caused by a number of physiologically independent processes—in which case, even if we prevented one of these processes, people would still die at much the same age of another—or whether there is one fundamental process of which the various superficial signs of senescence are merely symptoms. If the former assumption is correct, and the evidence suggests to me that it is, then a significant extension of the human life span is likely to prove very difficult.¹⁹ It would also contribute disastrously to the present increase in world population. But should the world population problem prove soluble without war or famine, then an increase in human life span, if it could be associated with an appropriate decrease in human fertility, seems to me very desirable.

Olaf Stapledon, in his book *Last and First Men*, imagined the use of biological engineering to produce superintelligences. Human neural tissue was permitted to grow and ramify through the corridors of a building and was supplied with sensory information and a motor output. In *Sirius* the same author imagined a dog whose intelligence, by surgical and other means, had been made equal to that of a man. These feats are not at present technically possible, but there is no reason that it should not eventually be possible to bring about a dramatic increase in the size of certain parts of a human or animal brain by influencing development. It is, of course, by no means

certain that such a simple procedure would lead to an equivalent increase in intelligence; it might equally well lead to idiocy. But there is one reason to suspect that an appropriate increase in size, together with other comparatively minor changes in structure, might lead to a large increase in intelligence. The evolution of modern man from non-tool-making ancestors has presumably been associated with and dependent on a large increase in intelligence, but has been completed in what is on an evolutionary scale a rather short time—at most a few million years. This suggests that the transformation in the brain which provided the required increase in intelligence may have been growth in size with relatively little increase in structural complexity—there was insufficient time for natural selection to do more. Of course, this process may have reached its limit, and further increase in intelligence may require a major reorganization of structure, which would be difficult to bring about by “engineering” methods.

On balance, it seems quite likely that within a hundred years or so it will be technically feasible to do the kinds of things imagined in Stapledon’s books. But even if it is, it is not clear what the consequences would be. To ask oneself the consequence of building such an intelligence is a little like asking an *Australopithecine* what kind of questions Newton would ask himself and what answers he would give. One way of putting the problem is this: What questions could be asked or answered by a “superintelligence” composed of neurons which could not be asked and answered by teams of investigators given time and the assistance of computers? It is quite possible that the answer to this question is “none.” But I suspect that if our species survives, someone will try it and see.

The subjects discussed in this essay are diverse, so I will attempt to summarize my argument and draw some general conclusions. First, evolutionary changes are constantly occurring in the human species, and most legislative or social measures we take inevitably influence the nature of these changes. Some, but by no means all, of the genetic changes consequent upon improved medical and social services are dysgenic. At present, there is little that we can do to prevent these dysgenic effects, and the proper course for us to adopt is to regard them as part of the price we pay for being civilized. In any case these genetic changes are extremely slow in comparison with technical changes, and it is reasonable to hope that before they have become

significant it may be possible to avert or reverse them by techniques of genetic transformation.

Deliberate measures to alter man's biological nature may be negative, designed to prevent or cure mental or physical defect, or positive, designed to produce individuals of unusually high performance in a desired area or to raise the mean level of performance. Techniques available can be classified as selectionist eugenics, transformationist eugenics, and biological engineering. Selectionist eugenics involves altering the relative number of offspring born to particular kinds of individuals or pairs. In most cases, these procedures are likely to be too ineffective to be worth bothering with. But it is worth making an effort to prevent individuals who carry deleterious dominant mutations which manifest themselves late in life from having children and to prevent the carriers of the same recessive lethal or deleterious gene from marrying one another, although the latter measure would have dysgenic effects in the long run. In the positive field, selectionist eugenics is again likely to be relatively ineffective. Probably the most effective procedure, and one which should become technically feasible in the fairly near future, would be some form of cloning.

Transformationist eugenics, involving direct alteration of specific genes in specific ways, is not at the moment possible, but may become so. If it does become possible, its use in negative eugenics would be desirable; but it is less clear what role it could play in positive eugenics.

Biological engineering in the negative field is simply another word for current medical practice. Problems, both technical and ethical, arise in the use of similar techniques to produce individuals of outstanding ability rather than to cure or prevent abnormality. Two major undertakings can be considered. One, a significant increase in the human life span, although dangerous unless the world population problem has been solved, will in the long run be desirable; but it is likely to prove very difficult and perhaps impossible. The other, the production of individuals generally resembling human beings but of outstanding intelligence, may prove relatively easy, although there is no guarantee that this is so; but even if it is technically feasible, it does not seem possible to predict what important results, if any, would ensue.

But these problems of transformationist eugenics, increase of longevity, and superintelligence still lie in a future which is distant in historical terms even if it is immediate on an evolutionary time scale. Our immediate problem is what should be done with the means now available to us, and, more immediate still, what should geneticists and other biologists recommend be done.

I think the answer to this question is that we should not recommend that anything be done except the simple and limited negative measures suggested above. The reason for this is that I believe recommendations of positive eugenic measures can at the present only distract attention from more urgent and important questions. The most urgent message which biologists have to convey to the public is that if something is not done to arrest the present increase in world population, then that increase will be arrested by war, disease, and starvation. Eugenics can wait; birth control cannot.

ENDNOTES

¹For a discussion of this point, see P. B. Medawar, *The Future of Man* (London: Methuen, 1959).

²The evidence for a negative correlation between family size and IQ is summarized by L. S. Penrose, "Evidence of Heterosis in Man," *Proceedings of the Royal Society*, B. 144 (1955):203. Penrose puts forward a genetic hypothesis which would account for this correlation and yet predict no change in IQ with time. His views have been criticized by P. B. Medawar, *Future of Man*, and by K. Mather, "Genetical Demography," *Proceedings of the Royal Society*, B. 159 (1963):106. For a comparison of the 1932 and 1947 surveys in Scotland, see G. H. Thomson, *The Trend of Scottish Intelligence* (London: University of London Press, 1949).

³The argument which follows is presented in J. B. S. Haldane, *Heredity and Politics* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1938).

⁴Another genetically determined abnormality which, although not caused by a dominant gene, could be reduced in frequency by negative eugenic measures is translocation mongolism. Individuals of either sex heterozygous for a translocation involving chromosome 21 are themselves normal, but one-third of their children will be mongolian idiots and one-third will be "carriers"; only one-third will be normal and likely to have normal children. Such people could be recognized if the chromosomes in a skin or blood sample were examined, and most of them would be found if all relatives of known mongols were examined. But the arguments for sterilization are perhaps less strong than in the case of Huntingdon's chorea because mongolian idiots are commonly quite cheerful and contented. In any case, sterilization would not prevent the more common form of mongolism which is due to nondisjunction in the mother.

- ⁵It has recently been found that a homozygous baby, if recognized at birth and subsequently kept on a diet free of phenylalanine, can develop normal intelligence. This does not affect the argument concerning the ineffectiveness of sterilization in the case of diseases caused by recessive genes, but it does illustrate the important point that genetically determined diseases may be curable.
- ⁶This frequency omits cases known to have consanguineous parents. The frequency of carriers has been worked out from the Hardy-Weinberg ratio, assuming random mating.
- ⁷It could be argued that this would not be dysgenic provided that marriage between heterozygotes was prevented. However, it is unlikely that we should succeed in preventing all such marriages. Also, the proportion of marriages contraindicated on genetic grounds would increase. But it seems likely that long before these effects become serious some technique of negative transformationist eugenics will be available.
- ⁸The idea that financial measures might be used for eugenic purposes was put forward by R. A. Fisher, *The Genetical Theory of Natural Selection* (London: Oxford University Press, 1930). The suggestion of a tax on children was made, perhaps not very seriously, by F. H. C. Crick in *Man and His Future*, ed. Gordon Wolstenholme (London: Churchill, 1963), 276. The suggestion has the virtue of bringing out the necessary contradiction between financial measures suggested on eugenic grounds and those suggested by the humanitarian desire to protect children from the incompetence of their parents. On the same occasion, Crick made the more important point that the time has come to question our present assumption that people have a right to have children.
- ⁹H. J. Muller, *Out of the Night* (New York: Vanguard Press, 1935); and "Genetical Progress by Voluntarily Conducted Germinal Choice," in Gordon Wolstenholme, *Man and His Future*.
- ¹⁰J. S. Huxley, *Eugenics in Evolutionary Perspective* (London: Eugenics Society, 1962).
- ¹¹C. Lévi-Strauss, *A World on the Wane* (London: Hutchinson, 1961).
- ¹²For the occurrence of "plateaus" in selection experiments, see, for example, K. Mather and B. J. Harrison, "The Manifold Effects of Selection," *Heredity* 3 (1949):131; and I. M. Lerner, *Genetic Homeostasis* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1954).
- ¹³A small change in mean will not alter the variance if the effects of a different gene on IQ are additive and if the frequencies of alleles for high and low intelligence are on the average equal.
- ¹⁴C. Burt, "Is Intelligence Distributed Normally?" *British Journal of Statistical Psychology* 16 (1963):175.
- ¹⁵The occurrence of such correlated changes is not in doubt, although their explanation is still a matter of controversy; the subject is discussed in the references given under 12 above.
- ¹⁶These two points are too important to be dismissed in a brief paragraph; my excuse is that they have been discussed more fully by T. Dohzhansky, *Mankind Evolving* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962).
- ¹⁷T. J. King and R. Briggs, "Serial Transplantation of Embryonic Nuclei," *Cold Spring Harbor Symposia on Quantitative Biology* 27 (1956):271.
- ¹⁸Some possible developments of biological engineering, or "euphenics," were discussed by J. Lederberg, "Biological Future of Man," in Gordon Wolstenholme, *Man and His Future*.

¹⁹For a discussion of this point, see C. C. Williams, "Pleiotrophy, Natural Selection and the Evolution of Senescence," *Evolution* 11 (1957):398; and J. Maynard Smith, "The Causes of Ageing," *Proceedings of the Royal Society*, B. 157 (1962):115.

Czesław Miłosz

The Novel in Poland

The Editor
Dædalus

Dear Sir:

You asked me to write on the novel in Poland. I gave just an outline, no more than sketchy information. You may wonder why my piece is dry to the extent that one is unable to guess my own personal views on the subject. I feel I should explain my reticence.

On the contemporary novel written in Polish or in any other language, I have very little to say. I am confused and would like to see people who are not confused. There are some portents that should not be overlooked. Starting with my own reactions, I have to force myself to read a novel as if warned in advance by the boredom emanating from the devices one knows so well. To my surprise, I have discovered that many young Americans, if I may judge by Berkeley students, avoid novels, even if they are quite zealous readers of poetry, essays, and philosophy. Is it not significant that the only fad in fiction on the Berkeley campus has been of late (besides *Candy*) fantasies of Tolkien, which hardly fit what is generally meant by "a novel"? In Poland today, the novel is certainly not considered a dominating genre. I sense in this a curious parallelism, a sign, perhaps, of a too much scorned *Zeitgeist*.

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Good luck to novelists. I have written two novels: one bad, hastily jotted down for an international contest (which I won); another, probably not quite so bad, praised by readers, who accepted it as a kind of autobiographical story of my childhood in the woods of Lithuania. It seems to me that my readers' penchant toward interpreting it as "authentic" (while it is rather an exercise in disguised metaphysics) should be a lesson. They yearn after Daddy Defoe. Is it not so, that he set the pace forever and that any attempt to go beyond a "true story" and a "true romance" is doomed to failure? In any case, if what is good in my novel (*Dolina Issy—Tal der Issa* in German, *Sur les bords de l'Issa* in French) is a result of my training as a poet, why should I write novels? I am interested in capturing whatever can be captured of a large whole, not in inventing situations.

Another confession. I like to read books on the novel, such as *L'Histoire du roman moderne* by R. M. Alberès. Here, I touch upon a shameful, unconfessed spot in the consciousness of modern man. He prefers books on the novel, on poetry, or on drama, to the novels, poems, or dramas themselves. Is he wrong? Not necessarily. His meditation on the changeability of styles and beliefs, let us call it anthropological meditation, is more vast than what creative writers are able to convey. And in every creative writer today there is a certain shame, a struggle of his awareness, his intelligence, against his means, which are always obsolete.

I agree with Camus when, in his *L'Homme révolté*, he defends fiction. We know that when a man tries to tell nothing but the truth about himself, in diaries or memoirs, he lies much more than when he invents characters and plots, calling a boy whom he loved Albertine. Thus, only through the falsity of a convention can he tell something about his life experience. He will not renounce that urge, which in a crude form reveals itself in drunken confessions mumbled to a barman. So fiction will exist. Unfortunately, we look more and more on our (extraordinary) experiences as commonplace, something that happens to Everyman. And instead of a novel, we are writing a medieval morality play on the Sinner. Where is the place for our (extraordinary) affairs with Julia or Judith if we are all sad flesh soaring above our confines with a feeling of self-pity and universal compassion?

Undoubtedly, the novel's strength stems from a curiosity about a reality that is veiled yet cognizable. All the work of Balzac tends toward penetrating the secret of the big city, of its mythical center, where innumerable human fates crisscross at a given moment. Yet Balzac also needed an act of faith in the adequacy of his tool, and this is why he defined his goal in the preface to his *Human Comedy*: to write a natural history of society. The novel thrives probably in an intermediary zone between mimesis, which threatens it with an invasion of false or valid poetry, and argument, which beyond certain limits degenerates into publicism. Many people today make sour faces at the sallies of Tolstoy, the polemicist, in *War and Peace*, as something "unartistic." They forget that had it not been for Tolstoy's passionate commitment to unraveling events, commenting, exposing his opinions, his epic would never have been written. We live in a time when a defense of "purity" in art is already an automatic reflex. This means that genuflections before art are permitted under one condition, namely, that it keep within its own specific sphere. The meaning of the adjective *specific* varies, but nearly always it denotes "away from discourse." Poetry can cope with this situation and even find a way out. A friend of mine, an eminent Polish poet of the younger generation, said in a letter to me that poetry for him is nearly identical with the search of pre-Socratic philosophers and with gnosis. That is, more or less, what I think too. Yet the principle of prose is completely different. Whatever might be advanced to the contrary, the severe, "bare," rational, Stendhalian sentence remains its ideal. A belief in rational cognition, not "specific cognition" through art, seems inseparable from any healthy prose. Unfortunately, contemporary thought is very complex; it discourages the novelist who once upon a time used to be an investigator in sociology, economics, and psychology. The creative writer is left with the enigma of existence as his only theme, with a gigantic commonplace. What material for a novel could be drawn out of *Ah, les beaux jours* of Samuel Beckett? I am not convinced by the poetry that is published nowadays so often under the label of novels. Poetry has a discipline of its own; it should stick to its peculiar ways. Not that I am against mixing the literary genres. On the contrary; but poetry assimilates various prosaisms much better than prose tolerates injections of objective correlatives.

Perhaps all my skepticism boils down to my view of the writer as a reasonable human being. As such, he is confronted by a reality that resists his attempts at rational ordering, both in the sense of cognition and action. His feeling of impotence in the face of man-created absurdity makes him jealous of the great novelists of the past, who trusted their vocation as pathfinders. There is one quite unpopular truth that should be pronounced aloud even if it is just saying that the king is naked: a man paralyzed in the exercise of his intelligence and of his will cannot write good novels. Today, he is tossed around by mechanisms endowed with an inhuman logic of their own, so he looks for more cryptic means of taking revenge—intellectual acrobatics of essay or images of poetry with their multiple layers of meaning.

You may be surprised by my dichotomy: poetry and prose. To put it simply, I believe poetry is more sturdy, better rooted in the tradition of innumerable millennia, and probably better prepared for protean transformations. Fiction will exist, but as for its present status we seem to have returned not to the “true adventures” of Eulenspiegel, but to that phase when a sermon, a poem, a dramatic poem on the stage, a wary and circumspect confession of a Montaigne found themselves on the borderline separating the known from the unknown.

C.M.

Robert N. Bellah

Civil Religion in America

WHILE SOME HAVE ARGUED that Christianity is the national faith, and others that church and synagogue celebrate only the generalized religion of “the American Way of Life,” few have realized that there actually exists alongside of and rather clearly differentiated from the churches an elaborate and well-institutionalized civil religion in America. This article argues not only that there is such a thing, but also that this religion—or perhaps better, this religious dimension—has its own seriousness and integrity and requires the same care in understanding that any other religion does.¹

THE KENNEDY INAUGURAL

Kennedy’s inaugural address of 20 January 1961 serves as an example and a clue with which to introduce this complex subject. That address began:

We observe today not a victory of party but a celebration of freedom—symbolizing an end as well as a beginning—signifying renewal as well as change. For I have sworn before you and Almighty God the same solemn oath our forebears prescribed nearly a century and three quarters ago.

The world is very different now. For man holds in his mortal hands the power to abolish all forms of human poverty and to abolish all forms of human life. And yet the same revolutionary beliefs for which our forebears

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fought are still at issue around the globe—the belief that the rights of man come not from the generosity of the state but from the hand of God.

And it concluded:

Finally, whether you are citizens of America or of the world, ask of us the same high standards of strength and sacrifice that we shall ask of you. With a good conscience our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth to lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own.

These are the three places in this brief address in which Kennedy mentioned the name of God. If we could understand why he mentioned God, the way in which he did it, and what he meant to say in those three references, we would understand much about American civil religion. But this is not a simple or obvious task, and American students of religion would probably differ widely in their interpretation of these passages.

Let us consider first the placing of the three references. They occur in the two opening paragraphs and in the closing paragraph, thus providing a sort of frame for the more concrete remarks that form the middle part of the speech. Looking beyond this particular speech, we would find that similar references to God are almost invariably to be found in the pronouncements of American presidents on solemn occasions, though usually not in the working messages that the president sends to Congress on various concrete issues. How, then, are we to interpret this placing of references to God?

It might be argued that the passages quoted reveal the essentially irrelevant role of religion in the very secular society that is America. The placing of the references in this speech as well as in public life generally indicates that religion has “only a ceremonial significance”; it gets only a sentimental nod which serves largely to placate the more unenlightened members of the community, before a discussion of the really serious business with which religion has nothing whatever to do. A cynical observer might even say that an American president has to mention God or risk losing votes. A semblance of piety is merely one of the unwritten qualifications for the office, a bit more traditional than but not essentially different from the present-day requirement of a pleasing television personality.

But we know enough about the function of ceremony and ritual in various societies to make us suspicious of dismissing something as

unimportant because it is "only a ritual." What people say on solemn occasions need not be taken at face value, but it is often indicative of deep-seated values and commitments that are not made explicit in the course of everyday life. Following this line of argument, it is worth considering whether the very special placing of the references to God in Kennedy's address may not reveal something rather important and serious about religion in American life.

It might be countered that the very way in which Kennedy made his references reveals the essentially vestigial place of religion today. He did not refer to any religion in particular. He did not refer to Jesus Christ, or to Moses, or to the Christian church; certainly he did not refer to the Catholic church. In fact, his only reference was to the concept of God, a word which almost all Americans can accept but which means so many different things to so many different people that it is almost an empty sign. Is this not just another indication that in America religion is considered vaguely to be a good thing, but that people care so little about it that it has lost any content whatever? Isn't Eisenhower reported to have said, "Our government makes no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith—and I don't care what it is,"² and isn't that a complete negation of any real religion?

These questions are worth pursuing because they raise the issue of how civil religion relates to the political society, on the one hand, and to private religious organization, on the other. President Kennedy was a Christian, more specifically a Catholic Christian. Thus, his general references to God do not mean that he lacked a specific religious commitment. But why, then, did he not include some remark to the effect that Christ is the Lord of the world or some indication of respect for the Catholic church? He did not because these are matters of his own private religious belief and of his relation to his own particular church; they are not matters relevant in any direct way to the conduct of his public office. Others with different religious views and commitments to different churches or denominations are equally qualified participants in the political process. The principle of separation of church and state guarantees the freedom of religious belief and association but at the same time clearly segregates the religious sphere, which is considered to be essentially private, from the political one.

Considering the separation of church and state, how is a president justified in using the word *God* at all? The answer is that the separation of church and state has not denied the political realm a religious dimension. Although matters of personal religious belief, worship, and association are considered to be strictly private affairs, there are, at the same time, certain common elements of religious orientation that the great majority of Americans share. These have played a crucial role in the development of American institutions and still provide a religious dimension for the whole fabric of American life, including the political sphere. This public religious dimension is expressed in a set of beliefs, symbols, and rituals that I am calling the American civil religion. The inauguration of a president is an important ceremonial event in this religion. It reaffirms, among other things, the religious legitimation of the lightest political authority.

Let us look more closely at what Kennedy actually said. First he said, "I have sworn before you and Almighty God the same solemn oath our forebears prescribed nearly a century and three quarters ago." The oath is the oath of office, including the acceptance of the obligation to uphold the Constitution. He swears it before the people (you) and God. Beyond the Constitution, then, the president's obligation extends not only to the people but to God. In American political theory, sovereignty rests, of course, with the people, but implicitly, and often explicitly, the ultimate sovereignty has been attributed to God. This is the meaning of the motto "In God we trust," as well as the inclusion of the phrase "under God" in the pledge to the flag. What difference does it make that sovereignty belongs to God? Though the will of the people as expressed in majority vote is carefully institutionalized as the operative source of political authority, it is deprived of an ultimate significance. The will of the people is not itself the criterion of right and wrong. There is a higher criterion in terms of which this will can be judged; it is possible that the people may be wrong. The president's obligation extends to the higher criterion.

When Kennedy says that "the rights of man come not from the generosity of the state but from the hand of God," he is stressing this point again. It does not matter whether the state is the expression of the will of an autocratic monarch or of the "people"; the rights of man are more basic than any political structure and provide a point of revolutionary leverage from which any state structure may be

radically altered. That is the basis for his reassertion of the revolutionary significance of America.

But the religious dimension in political life as recognized by Kennedy not only provides a grounding for the rights of man which makes any form of political absolutism illegitimate; it also provides a transcendent goal for the political process. This is implied in his final words that "here on earth God's work must truly be our own." What he means here is, I think, more clearly spelled out in a previous paragraph, the wording of which, incidentally, has a distinctly biblical ring:

Now the trumpet summons us again—not as a call to bear arms, though arms we need—not as a call to battle, though embattled we are—but a call to bear the burden of a long twilight struggle, year in and year out, "rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation"—a struggle against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease and war itself.

The whole address can be understood as only the most recent statement of a theme that lies very deep in the American tradition, namely the obligation, both collective and individual, to carry out God's will on earth. This was the motivating spirit of those who founded America, and it has been present in every generation since. Just below the surface throughout Kennedy's inaugural address, it becomes explicit in the closing statement that God's work must be our own. That this very activist and noncontemplative conception of the fundamental religious obligation, which has been historically associated with the Protestant position, should be enunciated so clearly in the first major statement of the first Catholic president seems to underline how deeply established it is in the American outlook. Let us now consider the form and history of the civil religious tradition in which Kennedy was speaking.

THE IDEA OF A CIVIL RELIGION

The phrase *civil religion* is, of course, Rousseau's. In Chapter 8, Book 4, of *The Social Contract*, he outlines the simple dogmas of the civil religion: the existence of God, the life to come, the reward of virtue and the punishment of vice, and the exclusion of religious intolerance. All other religious opinions are outside the cognizance of the state and may be freely held by citizens. While the phrase *civil religion*

was not used, to the best of my knowledge, by the founding fathers, and I am certainly not arguing for the particular influence of Rousseau, it is clear that similar ideas, as part of the cultural climate of the late eighteenth century, were to be found among the Americans. For example, Franklin writes in his autobiography:

I never was without some religious principles. I never doubted, for instance, the existence of the Deity; that he made the world and govern'd it by his Providence; that the most acceptable service of God was the doing of good to men; that our souls are immortal; and that all crime will be punished, and virtue rewarded either here or hereafter. These I esteemed the essentials of every religion; and, being to be found in all the religions we had in our country, I respected them all, tho' with different degrees of respect, as I found them more or less mix'd with other articles, which, without any tendency to inspire, promote or confirm morality, serv'd principally to divide us, and make us unfriendly to one another.

It is easy to dispose of this sort of position as essentially utilitarian in relation to religion. In Washington's Farewell Address (though the words may be Hamilton's) the utilitarian aspect is quite explicit:

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, Religion and Morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of Patriotism, who should labour to subvert these great Pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man ought to respect and cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation *desert* the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in the Courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that National morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

But there is every reason to believe that religion, particularly the idea of God, played a constitutive role in the thought of the early American statesmen.

Kennedy's inaugural pointed to the religious aspect of the Declaration of Independence, and it might be well to look at that document a bit more closely. There are four references to God. The first speaks of the "Laws of Nature and of Nature's God" which entitle any

people to be independent. The second is the famous statement that all men "are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights." Here Jefferson is locating the fundamental legitimacy of the new nation in a conception of "higher law" that is itself based on both classical natural law and biblical religion. The third is an appeal to "the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions," and the last indicates "a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence." In these last two references, a biblical God of history who stands in judgment over the world is indicated.

The intimate relation of these religious notions with the self-conception of the new republic is indicated by the frequency of their appearance in early official documents. For example, we find in Washington's first inaugural address of 30 April 1789:

It would be peculiarly improper to omit in this first official act my fervent supplications to that Almighty Being who rules over the universe, who presides in the councils of nations, and whose providential aids can supply every defect, that His benediction may consecrate to the liberties and happiness of the people of the United States a Government instituted by themselves for these essential purposes, and may enable every instrument employed in its administration to execute with success the functions allotted to his charge.

No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the Invisible Hand which conducts the affairs of man more than those of the United States. Every step by which we have advanced to the character of an independent nation seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency. . . .

The propitious smiles of Heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right which Heaven itself has ordained. . . . The preservation of the sacred fire of liberty and the destiny of the republican model of government are justly considered, perhaps, as *deeply*, as *finally*, staked on the experiment intrusted to the hands of the American people.

Nor did these religious sentiments remain merely the personal expression of the president. At the request of both houses of Congress, Washington proclaimed on October 3 of that same first year as president that November 26 should be "a day of public thanksgiving and prayer," the first Thanksgiving Day under the Constitution.

The words and acts of the founding fathers, especially the first few presidents, shaped the form and tone of the civil religion as it has been maintained ever since. Though much is selectively derived from Christianity, this religion is clearly not itself Christianity. For one thing, neither Washington nor Adams nor Jefferson mentions Christ in his inaugural address; nor do any of the subsequent presidents, although not one of them fails to mention God.³ The God of the civil religion is not only rather "unitarian"; he is also on the austere side, much more related to order, law, and right than to salvation and love. Even though he is somewhat deist in cast, he is by no means simply a watchmaker God. He is actively interested and involved in history, with a special concern for America. Here the analogy has much less to do with natural law than with ancient Israel; the equation of America with Israel in the idea of the "American Israel" is not infrequent.⁴ What was implicit in the words of Washington already quoted becomes explicit in Jefferson's second inaugural when he said, "I shall need, too, the favor of that Being in whose hands we are, who led our fathers, as Israel of old, from their native land and planted them in a country flowing with all the necessities and comforts of life." Europe is Egypt; America, the promised land. God has led his people to establish a new sort of social order that shall be a light unto all the nations.⁵

This theme, too, has been a continuous one in the civil religion. We have already alluded to it in the case of the Kennedy inaugural. We find it again in President Johnson's inaugural address:

They came here—the exile and the stranger, brave but frightened—to find a place where a man could be his own man. They made a covenant with this land. Conceived in justice, written in liberty, bound in union, it was meant one day to inspire the hopes of all mankind; and it binds us still. If we keep its terms, we shall flourish.

What we have, then, from the earliest years of the republic is a collection of beliefs, symbols, and rituals with respect to sacred things and institutionalized in a collectivity. This religion—there seems no other word for it—while not antithetical to and indeed sharing much in common with Christianity, was neither sectarian nor in any specific sense Christian. At a time when the society was overwhelmingly Christian, it seems unlikely that this lack of Christian reference was meant to spare the feelings of the tiny non-Christian minority.

Rather, the civil religion expressed what those who set the precedents felt was appropriate under the circumstances. It reflected their private as well as public views. Nor was the civil religion simply "religion in general." While generality was undoubtedly seen as a virtue by some, as in the quotation from Franklin above, the civil religion was specific enough when it came to the topic of America. Precisely because of this specificity, the civil religion was saved from empty formalism and served as a genuine vehicle of national religious self-understanding.

But the civil religion was not, in the minds of Franklin, Washington, Jefferson, or other leaders, with the exception of a few radicals like Tom Paine, ever felt to be a substitute for Christianity. There was an implicit but quite clear division of function between the civil religion and Christianity. Under the doctrine of religious liberty, an exceptionally wide sphere of personal piety and voluntary social action was left to the churches. But the churches were neither to control the state nor to be controlled by it. The national magistrate, whatever his private religious views, operates under the rubrics of the civil religion as long as he is in his official capacity, as we have already seen in the case of Kennedy. This accommodation was undoubtedly the product of a particular historical moment and of a cultural background dominated by Protestantism of several varieties and by the Enlightenment, but it has survived despite subsequent changes in the cultural and religious climate.

CIVIL WAR AND CIVIL RELIGION

Until the Civil War, the American civil religion focused above all on the event of the Revolution, which was seen as the final act of the Exodus from the old lands across the waters. The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were the sacred scriptures and Washington the divinely appointed Moses who led his people out of the hands of tyranny. The Civil War, which Sidney Mead calls "the center of American history,"⁶ was the second great event that involved the national self-understanding so deeply as to require expression in the civil religion. In 1835, Tocqueville wrote that the American republic had never really been tried, that victory in the Revolutionary War was more the result of British preoccupation elsewhere and the presence of a powerful ally than of any great military success of the Americans. But in 1861 the time of testing had

indeed come. Not only did the Civil War have the tragic intensity of fratricidal strife, but it was one of the bloodiest wars of the nineteenth century; the loss of life was far greater than any previously suffered by Americans.

The Civil War raised the deepest questions of national meaning. The man who not only formulated but in his own person embodied its meaning for Americans was Abraham Lincoln. For him the issue was not in the first instance slavery but “whether that nation, or any nation so conceived, and so dedicated, can long endure.” He had said in Independence Hall in Philadelphia on 22 February 1861:

All the political sentiments I entertain have been drawn, so far as I have been able to draw them, from the sentiments which originated in and were given to the world from this Hall. I have never had a feeling, politically, that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence.⁷

The phrases of Jefferson constantly echo in Lincoln’s speeches. His task was, first of all, to save the Union—not for America alone but for the meaning of America to the whole world so unforgettably etched in the last phrase of the Gettysburg Address.

But inevitably the issue of slavery as the deeper cause of the conflict had to be faced. In the second inaugural, Lincoln related slavery and the war in an ultimate perspective:

If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives both to the North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondsman’s two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said “the judgements of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.”

But he closes on a note if not of redemption then of reconciliation—
“With malice toward none, with charity for all.”

With the Civil War, a new theme of death, sacrifice, and rebirth enters the civil religion. It is symbolized in the life and death of Lincoln. Nowhere is it stated more vividly than in the Gettysburg Address, itself part of the Lincolnian "New Testament" among the civil scriptures. Robert Lowell has recently pointed out the "insistent use of birth images" in this speech explicitly devoted to "these honored dead": "brought forth," "conceived," "created," "a new birth of freedom." He goes on to say:

The Gettysburg Address is a symbolic and sacramental act. Its verbal quality is resonance combined with a logical, matter of fact, prosaic brevity. . . . In his words, Lincoln symbolically died, just as the Union soldiers really died—and as he himself was soon ready to die. By his words, he gave the field of battle a symbolic significance that it had lacked. For us and our country, he left Jefferson's ideals of freedom and equality joined to the Christian sacrificial act of death and rebirth. I believe this is a meaning that goes beyond sect or religion and beyond peace and war, and is now part of our lives as a challenge, obstacle and hope.⁸

Lowell is certainly right in pointing out the Christian quality of the symbolism here, but he is also right in quickly disavowing any sectarian implication. The earlier symbolism of the civil religion had been Hebraic without being in any specific sense Jewish. The Gettysburg symbolism (" . . . those who here gave their lives, that that nation might live") is Christian without having anything to do with the Christian church.

The symbolic equation of Lincoln with Jesus was made relatively early. Herndon, who had been Lincoln's law partner, wrote:

For fifty years God rolled Abraham Lincoln through his fiery furnace. He did it to try Abraham and to purify him for his purposes. This made Mr. Lincoln humble, tender, forbearing, sympathetic to suffering, kind, sensitive, tolerant; broadening, deepening and widening his whole nature; making him the noblest and loveliest character since Jesus Christ. . . . I believe that Lincoln was God's chosen one.⁹

With the Christian archetype in the background, Lincoln, "our martyred president," was linked to the war dead, those who "gave the last full measure of devotion." The theme of sacrifice was indelibly written into the civil religion.

The new symbolism soon found both physical and ritualistic expression. The great number of the war dead required the establishment of a number of national cemeteries. Of these, the Gettysburg National Cemetery, which Lincoln's famous address served to dedicate, has been overshadowed only by the Arlington National Cemetery. Begun somewhat vindictively on the Lee estate across the river from Washington, partly with the end that the Lee family could never reclaim it,¹⁰ it has subsequently become the most hallowed monument of the civil religion. Not only was a section set aside for the Confederate dead, but it has received the dead of each succeeding American war. It is the site of the one important new symbol to come out of World War I, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier; more recently it has become the site of the tomb of another martyred president and its symbolic eternal flame.

Memorial Day, which grew out of the Civil War, gave ritual expression to the themes we have been discussing. As Lloyd Warner has so brilliantly analyzed it, the Memorial Day observance, especially in the towns and smaller cities of America, is a major event for the whole community involving a rededication to the martyred dead, to the spirit of sacrifice, and to the American vision.¹¹ Just as Thanksgiving Day, which incidentally was securely institutionalized as an annual national holiday only under the presidency of Lincoln, serves to integrate the family into the civil religion, so Memorial Day has acted to integrate the local community into the national cult. Together with the less overtly religious Fourth of July and the more minor celebrations of Veterans Day and the birthdays of Washington and Lincoln, these two holidays provide an annual ritual calendar for the civil religion. The public school system serves as a particularly important context for the cultic celebration of the civil rituals.

THE CIVIL RELIGION TODAY

In reifying and giving a name to something that, though pervasive enough when you look at it, has gone on only semiconsciously, there is risk of severely distorting the data. But the reification and the naming have already begun. The religious critics of "religion in general," or of the "religion of the 'American Way of Life,'" or of "American Shinto" have really been talking about the civil religion. As usual in religious polemic, they take as criteria the best in their

own religious tradition and as typical the worst in the tradition of the civil religion. Against these critics, I would argue that the civil religion at its best is a genuine apprehension of universal and transcendent religious reality as seen in or, one could almost say, as revealed through the experience of the American people. Like all religions, it has suffered various deformations and demonic distortions. At its best, it has neither been so general that it has lacked incisive relevance to the American scene nor so particular that it has placed American society above universal human values. I am not at all convinced that the leaders of the churches have consistently represented a higher level of religious insight than the spokesmen of the civil religion. Reinhold Niebuhr has this to say of Lincoln, who never joined a church and who certainly represents civil religion at its best:

An analysis of the religion of Abraham Lincoln in the context of the traditional religion of his time and place and of its polemical use on the slavery issue, which corrupted religious life in the days before and during the Civil War, must lead to the conclusion that Lincoln's religious convictions were superior in depth and purity to those, not only of the political leaders of his day, but of the religious leaders of the era.¹²

Perhaps the real animus of the religious critics has been not so much against the civil religion in itself but against its pervasive and dominating influence within the sphere of church religion. As S. M. Lipset has recently shown, American religion at least since the early nineteenth century has been predominantly activist, moralistic, and social rather than contemplative, theological, or innerly spiritual.¹³ Tocqueville spoke of American church religion as "a political institution which powerfully contributes to the maintenance of a democratic republic among the Americans"¹⁴ by supplying a strong moral consensus amidst continuous political change. Henry Barge in 1902 spoke of American church religion as "*la poésie du civisme*."¹⁵

It is certainly true that the relation between religion and politics in America has been singularly smooth. This is in large part due to the dominant tradition. As Tocqueville wrote:

The greatest part of British America was peopled by men who, after having shaken off the authority of the Pope, acknowledged no other religious supremacy: they brought with them into the New World a form of Christianity which I cannot better describe than by styling it a democratic and republican religion.¹⁶

The churches opposed neither the Revolution nor the establishment of democratic institutions. Even when some of them opposed the full institutionalization of religious liberty, they accepted the final outcome with good grace and without nostalgia for an *ancien régime*. The American civil religion was never anticlerical or militantly secular. On the contrary, it borrowed selectively from the religious tradition in such a way that the average American saw no conflict between the two. In this way, the civil religion was able to build up without any bitter struggle with the church powerful symbols of national solidarity and to mobilize deep levels of personal motivation for the attainment of national goals.

Such an achievement is by no means to be taken for granted. It would seem that the problem of a civil religion is quite general in modern societies and that the way it is solved or not solved will have repercussions in many spheres. One needs only to think of France to see how differently things can go. The French Revolution was anticlerical to the core and attempted to set up an anti-Christian civil religion. Throughout modern French history, the chasm between traditional Catholic symbols and the symbolism of 1789 has been immense.

American civil religion is still very much alive. Just three years ago we participated in a vivid reenactment of the sacrifice theme in connection with the funeral of our assassinated president. The American Israel theme is clearly behind both Kennedy's New Frontier and Johnson's Great Society. Let me give just one recent illustration of how the civil religion serves to mobilize support for the attainment of national goals. On 15 March 1965 President Johnson went before Congress to ask for a strong voting-rights bill. Early in the speech he said:

Rarely are we met with the challenge, not to our growth or abundance, or our welfare or our security—but rather to the values and the purposes and the meaning of our beloved nation.

The issue of equal rights for American Negroes is such an issue. And should we defeat every enemy, and should we double our wealth and conquer the stars and still be unequal to this issue, then we will have failed as a people and as a nation.

For with a country as with a person, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

And in conclusion he said:

Above the pyramid on the great seal of the United States it says in Latin, "God has favored our undertaking."

God will not favor everything that we do. It is rather our duty to divine his will. I cannot help but believe that He truly understands and that He really favors the undertaking that we begin here tonight.¹⁷

The civil religion has not always been invoked in favor of worthy causes. On the domestic scene, an American Legion type of ideology that fuses God, country, and flag has been used to attack nonconformist and liberal ideas and groups of all kinds. Still, it has been difficult to use the words of Jefferson and Lincoln to support special interests and undermine personal freedom. The defenders of slavery before the Civil War came to reject the thinking of the Declaration of Independence. Some of the most consistent of them turned against not only Jeffersonian democracy but Reformation religion; they dreamed of a South dominated by medieval chivalry and divine-right monarchy.¹⁸ For all the overt religiosity of the radical right today, their relation to the civil religious consensus is tenuous, as when the John Birch Society attacks the central American symbol of democracy itself.

With respect to America's role in the world, the dangers of distortion are greater and the built-in safeguards of the tradition weaker. The theme of the American Israel was used, almost from the beginning, as a justification for the shameful treatment of the Indians so characteristic of our history. It can be overtly or implicitly linked to the idea of manifest destiny which has been used to legitimate several adventures in imperialism since the early nineteenth century. Never has the danger been greater than today. The issue is not so much one of imperial expansion, of which we are accused, as of the tendency to assimilate all governments or parties in the world which support our immediate policies or call upon our help by invoking the notion of free institutions and democratic values. Those nations that are for the moment "on our side" become "the free world." A repressive and unstable military dictatorship in South Vietnam becomes "the free people of South Vietnam and their government." It is then part of the role of America as the New Jerusalem and "the last hope of earth" to defend such governments with treasure and eventually with blood. When our soldiers are actually dying, it becomes possible to consecrate the struggle further by invoking the

great theme of sacrifice. For the majority of the American people who are unable to judge whether the people in South Vietnam (or wherever) are "free like us," such arguments are convincing. Fortunately, President Johnson has been less ready to assert that "God has favored our undertakings" in the case of Vietnam than with respect to civil rights. But others are not so hesitant. The civil religion has exercised long-term pressure for the humane solution of our greatest domestic problem, the treatment of the Negro American. It remains to be seen how relevant it can become for our role in the world at large, and whether we can effectually stand for "the revolutionary beliefs for which our forebears fought," in John F. Kennedy's words.

The civil religion is obviously involved in the most pressing moral and political issues of the day. But it is also caught in another kind of crisis, theoretical and theological, of which it is at the moment largely unaware. "God" has clearly been a central symbol in the civil religion from the beginning and remains so today. This symbol is just as central to the civil religion as it is to Judaism or Christianity. In the late eighteenth century this posed no problem; even Tom Paine, contrary to his detractors, was not an atheist. From left to right and regardless of church or sect, all could accept the idea of God. But today, as even *Time* has recognized, the meaning of the word *God* is by no means so clear or so obvious. There is no formal creed in the civil religion. We have had a Catholic president; it is conceivable that we could have a Jewish one. But could we have an agnostic president? Could a man with conscientious scruples about using the word *God* the way Kennedy and Johnson have used it be elected chief magistrate of our country? If the whole God symbolism requires reformulation, there will be obvious consequences for the civil religion, consequences perhaps of liberal alienation and of fundamentalist ossification that have not so far been prominent in this realm. The civil religion has been a point of articulation between the profoundest commitments of the Western religious and philosophical tradition and the common beliefs of ordinary Americans. It is not too soon to consider how the deepening theological crisis may affect the future of this articulation.

THE THIRD TIME OF TRIAL

In conclusion it may be worthwhile to relate the civil religion to the most serious situation that we as Americans now face, what I call the

third time of trial. The first time of trial had to do with the question of independence, whether we should or could run our own affairs in our own way. The second time of trial was over the issue of slavery, which in turn was only the most salient aspect of the more general problem of the full institutionalization of democracy within our country. This second problem we are still far from solving though we have some notable successes to our credit. But we have been overtaken by a third great problem which has led to a third great crisis, in the midst of which we stand. This is the problem of responsible action in a revolutionary world, a world seeking to attain many of the things, material and spiritual, that we have already attained. Americans have, from the beginning, been aware of the responsibility and the significance our republican experiment has for the whole world. The first internal political polarization in the new nation had to do with our attitude toward the French Revolution. But we were small and weak then, and "foreign entanglements" seemed to threaten our very survival. During the last century, our relevance for the world was not forgotten, but our role was seen as purely exemplary. Our democratic republic rebuked tyranny by merely existing. Just after World War I we were on the brink of taking a different role in the world, but once again we turned our back.

Since World War II the old pattern has become impossible. Every president since Roosevelt has been groping toward a new pattern of action in the world, one that would be consonant with our power and our responsibilities. For Truman and for the period dominated by John Foster Dulles that pattern was seen to be the great Manichaean confrontation of East and West, the confrontation of democracy and "the false philosophy of communism" that provided the structure of Truman's inaugural address. But with the last years of Eisenhower and with the successive two presidents, the pattern began to shift. The great problems came to be seen as caused not solely by the evil intent of any one group of men, but as stemming from much more complex and multiple sources. For Kennedy, it was not so much a struggle against particular men as against "the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease and war itself."

But in the midst of this trend toward a less primitive conception of ourselves and our world, we have somehow, without anyone really intending it, stumbled into a military confrontation where we have come to feel that our honor is at stake. We have in a moment of

uncertainty been tempted to rely on our overwhelming physical power rather than on our intelligence, and we have, in part, succumbed to this temptation. Bewildered and unnerved when our terrible power fails to bring immediate success, we are at the edge of a chasm the depth of which no man knows.

I cannot help but think of Robinson Jeffers, whose poetry seems more apt now than when it was written, when he said:

Unhappy country, what wings you have! . . .
Weep (it is frequent in human affairs), weep for
the terrible magnificence of the means,
The ridiculous incompetence of the reasons, the
bloody and shabby
Pathos of the result.

But as so often before in similar times, we have a man of prophetic stature, without the bitterness or misanthropy of Jeffers, who, as Lincoln before him, calls this nation to its judgment:

When a nation is very powerful but lacking in self-confidence, it is likely to behave in a manner that is dangerous both to itself and to others.

Gradually but unmistakably, America is succumbing to that arrogance of power which has afflicted weakened and in some cases destroyed great nations in the past.

If the war goes on and expands, if that fatal process continues to accelerate until America becomes what it is not now and never has been, a seeker after unlimited power and empire, then Vietnam will have had a mighty and tragic fallout indeed.

I do not believe that will happen. I am very apprehensive but I still remain hopeful, and even confident, that America, with its humane and democratic traditions, will find the wisdom to match its power.¹⁹

Without an awareness that our nation stands under higher judgment, the tradition of the civil religion would be dangerous indeed. Fortunately, the prophetic voices have never been lacking. Our present situation brings to mind the Mexican-American war that Lincoln, among so many others, opposed. The spirit of civil disobedience that is alive today in the civil rights movement and the opposition to the Vietnam war was already clearly outlined by Henry David Thoreau when he wrote, "If the law is of such a nature that it requires you to be an agent of injustice to another, then I say, break the law." Thoreau's words "I would remind my countrymen that

they are men first, and Americans at a late and convenient hour”²⁰ provide an essential standard for any adequate thought and action in our third time of trial. As Americans, we have been well favored in the world, but it is as men that we will be judged.

Out of the first and second times of trial have come, as we have seen, the major symbols of the American civil religion. There seems little doubt that a successful negotiation of this third time of trial—the attainment of some kind of viable and coherent world order—would precipitate a major new set of symbolic forms. So far the flickering flame of the United Nations burns too low to be the focus of a cult, but the emergence of a genuine transnational sovereignty would certainly change this. It would necessitate the incorporation of vital international symbolism into our civil religion, or, perhaps a better way of putting it, it would result in American civil religion becoming simply one part of a new civil religion of the world. It is useless to speculate on the form such a civil religion might take, though it obviously would draw on religious traditions beyond the sphere of biblical religion alone. Fortunately, since the American civil religion is not the worship of the American nation but an understanding of the American experience in the light of ultimate and universal reality, the reorganization entailed by such a new situation need not disrupt the American civil religion’s continuity. A world civil religion could be accepted as a fulfillment and not a denial of American civil religion. Indeed, such an outcome has been the eschatological hope of American civil religion from the beginning. To deny such an outcome would be to deny the meaning of America itself.

Behind the civil religion at every point lie biblical archetypes: Exodus, Chosen People, Promised Land, New Jerusalem, Sacrificial Death and Rebirth. But it is also genuinely American and genuinely new. It has its own prophets and its own martyrs, its own sacred events and sacred places, its own solemn rituals and symbols. It is concerned that America be a society as perfectly in accord with the will of God as men can make it, and a light to all the nations.

It has often been used and is being used today as a cloak for petty interests and ugly passions. It is in need—as is any living faith—of continual reformation, of being measured by universal standards. But it is not evident that it is incapable of growth and new insight.

It does not make any decision for us. It does not remove us from moral ambiguity, from being, in Lincoln's fine phrase, an "almost chosen people." But it is a heritage of moral and religious experience from which we still have much to learn as we formulate the decisions that lie ahead.

ENDNOTES

¹Why something so obvious should have escaped serious analytical attention is in itself an interesting problem. Part of the reason is probably the controversial nature of the subject. From the earliest years of the nineteenth century, conservative religious and political groups have argued that Christianity is, in fact, the national religion. Some of them have from time to time and as recently as the 1950s proposed constitutional amendments that would explicitly recognize the sovereignty of Christ. In defending the doctrine of separation of church and state, opponents of such groups have denied that the national polity has, intrinsically, anything to do with religion at all. The moderates on this issue have insisted that the American state has taken a permissive and indeed supportive attitude toward religious groups (tax exemption, etc.), thus favoring religion but still missing the positive institutionalization with which I am concerned. But part of the reason this issue has been left in obscurity is certainly due to the peculiarly Western concept of religion as denoting a single type of collectivity of which an individual can be a member of one and only one at a time. The Durkheimian notion that every group has a religious dimension, which would be seen as obvious in southern or eastern Asia, is foreign to us. This obscures the recognition of such dimensions in our society.

²Quoted in Will Herberg, *Protestant-Catholic-Jew* (New York, 1955), 97.

³God is mentioned or referred to in all inaugural addresses but Washington's second, which is a very brief (two paragraphs) and perfunctory acknowledgment. It is not without interest that the actual word *God* does not appear until Monroe's second inaugural, 5 March 1821. In his first inaugural, Washington refers to God as "that Almighty Being who rules the universe," "Great Author of every public and private good," "Invisible Hand," and "benign Parent of the Human Race." John Adams refers to God as "Providence," "Being who is supreme over all," "Patron of Order," "Fountain of Justice," and "Protector in all ages of the world of virtuous liberty." Jefferson speaks of "that Infinite Power which rules the destinies of the universe," and "that Being in whose hands we are." Madison speaks of "that Almighty Being whose power regulates the destiny of nations," and "Heaven." Monroe uses "Providence" and "the Almighty" in his first inaugural and finally "Almighty God" in his second. See *Inaugural Addresses of the Presidents of the United States from George Washington 1789 to Harry S. Truman 1949*, 82d Congress, 2d Session, House Document No. 540, 1952.

⁴For example, Abiel Abbot, pastor of the First Church in Haverhill, Massachusetts, delivered a Thanksgiving sermon in 1799, *Traits of Resemblance in the People of the United States of America to Ancient Israel*, in which he said, "It has been often remarked that the people of the United States come nearer to a parallel with Ancient Israel, than any other nation upon the globe. Hence OUR AMERICAN

- ISRAEL is a term frequently used; and common consent allows it apt and proper." Cited in Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism* (New York, 1961), 665.
- ⁵That the Mosaic analogy was present in the minds of leaders at the very moment of the birth of the republic is indicated in the designs proposed by Franklin and Jefferson for a seal of the United States of America. Together with Adams, they formed a committee of three delegated by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, to draw up the new device. "Franklin proposed as the device Moses lifting up his wand and dividing the Red Sea while Pharaoh was overwhelmed by its waters, with the motto 'Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God.' Jefferson proposed the children of Israel in the wilderness 'led by a cloud by day and a pillar of fire at night.'" Anson Phelps Stokes, *Church and State in the United States*, vol. 1 (New York, 1950), 467-68.
- ⁶Sidney Mead, *The Lively Experiment* (New York, 1963), 12.
- ⁷Quoted by Arthur Lehman Goodhart in Allan Nevins, ed., *Lincoln and the Gettysburg Address* (Urbana, Ill., 1964), 39.
- ⁸*Ibid.*, 88-89.
- ⁹Quoted in Sherwood Eddy, *The Kingdom of God and the American Dream* (New York, 1941), 162.
- ¹⁰Karl Decker and Angus McSween, *Historic Arlington* (Washington, D. C., 1892), 60-67.
- ¹¹How extensive the activity associated with Memorial Day can be is indicated by Warner: "The sacred symbolic behavior of Memorial Day, in which scores of the town's organizations are involved, is ordinarily divided into four periods. During the year separate rituals are held by many of the associations for their dead, and many of these activities are connected with later Memorial Day events. In the second phase, preparations are made during the last three or four weeks for the ceremony itself, and some of the associations perform public rituals. The third phase consists of scores of rituals held in all the cemeteries, churches, and halls of the associations. These rituals consist of speeches and highly ritualized behavior. They last for two days and are climaxed by the fourth and last phase, in which all the separate celebrants gather in the center of the business district on the afternoon of Memorial Day. The separate organizations, with their members in uniform or with fitting insignia, march through the town, visit the shrines and monuments of the hero dead, and, finally, enter the cemetery. Here dozens of ceremonies are held, most of them highly symbolic and formalized." During these various ceremonies Lincoln is continually referred to and the Gettysburg Address recited many times. W. Lloyd Warner, *American Life* (Chicago, 1962), 8-9.
- ¹²Reinhold Niebuhr, "The Religion of Abraham Lincoln," in Nevins, *Lincoln and the Gettysburg Address*, 72. William J. Wolfe of the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, has written: "Lincoln is one of the greatest theologians of America—not in the technical meaning of producing a system of doctrine, certainly not as the defender of some one denomination, but in the sense of seeing the hand of God intimately in the affairs of nations. Just so the prophets of Israel criticized the events of their day from the perspective of the God who is concerned for history and who reveals His will within it. Lincoln now stands among God's latter-day prophets." *The Religion of Abraham Lincoln* (New York, 1963), 24.
- ¹³Seymour Martin Lipset, "Religion and American Values," in *The First New Nation* (New York, 1964).
- ¹⁴Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, vol. 1 (New York, 1954), 310.

¹⁵Henry Bary, *La Religion dans la société aux Etats-Unis* (Paris, 1902), 31.

¹⁶Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 311. Later he says, "In the United States even the religion of most of the citizens is republican, since it submits the truths of the other world to private judgment, as in politics the care of their temporal interests is abandoned to the good sense of the people. Thus every man is allowed freely to take that road which he thinks will lead him to heaven, just as the law permits every citizen to have the right of choosing his own government" (p. 436).

¹⁷House, *U.S. Congressional Record*, 15 March 1965, 4924, 4926.

¹⁸See Louis Hartz, "The Feudal Dream of the South," in *The Liberal Tradition in America* (New York, 1955).

¹⁹Speech of Senator J. William Fulbright of 28 April 1966, as reported in *The New York Times*, 29 April 1966.

²⁰Quoted in Yehoshua Arieli, *Individualism and Nationalism in American Ideology* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), 274.

John T. Noonan, Jr.

Intellectual and Demographic History

THE NUMBER OF HUMAN BIRTHS AND DEATHS and the number of living human beings can be recorded, calculated, or estimated for various places and periods. To the historian, the tabulations made constitute data. They are pieces of evidence which he must question for their own built-in assumptions and then fit with the evidence offered by other disciplines from geography to theology in order to carry out his job of describing human action. The historical task necessarily will involve postulating motives, purposes, valuations, and rationality in the men whose actions are described. If the historian is writing about human action in relation to population, his job is to weigh the evidence and to estimate the elements of human response that are reflected in a particular birth rate or a particular growth. The rates of births and deaths are precious material for him, but the answers to his questions come only from an interrogation of all the evidence available.

I

Among the pieces of evidence, fragile, intangible, and nonquantifiable, are human ideas themselves. That ideas affect behavior is, I suppose, the assumption of everyone who writes history. At the very least, economic historians endow human beings with an economic rationality that leads men to match their behavior to their financial

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prospect. In the writing of demographic history, hypotheses as to the causality of economic calculations predominate, possibly because of the academic antecedents of demography and demographers. If a close correlation is found between births and some economic factor—the price of grain, the size of a lot, the index of industrial production—it is often thought that the reason for a change in births has been satisfactorily accounted for. It is often assumed that some kind of economic rationality determines human habits of breeding. Such economic rationality is itself a type of idea or system of ideas.

Demographers who think of their work with contemporary data as a science have difficulty understanding what a historian is interested in. They are used to proceeding on the principle of parsimony—Ockham's old principle that entities are not to be multiplied in causal explanations. In applying this principle they are apt to look first to a demographic factor—if the number of births goes down and the number of marriages is found also to have decreased, the latter phenomenon may be taken as the cause of the former. If the demographic factor is not found, they turn most readily to an economic explanation, sometimes with the unexpressed conviction that, at bottom, economic reasons underlie human actions. They seek to demonstrate their causal hypotheses quantitatively. They are accustomed to measurement and are content only if measurable relationships can be worked out.

When these assumptions, useful for prediction and control purposes in a laboratory, are transferred to history, there is danger of grave distortion. Historians do not believe in multiplying causes needlessly, but they are aware that in most persons and in most societies a multiplicity of interacting, reinforcing, counterchecking forces are at play. Parsimony is a poor principle if it suppresses part of the play.

Quantitative measurement, desirable if attainable, is not the only tool for understanding the acts of human beings. Ideas other than demographic observation or economic estimations are operative in the behavior of men. That such noneconomic ideas affect births and deaths as well as other human activities does not, *a priori*, seem unlikely. The extent and force of these ideas and their effect on population may be expected to vary with the ideas and with the people holding them. Competing ideas exist in the same society and in the same men, and to take ideas into account is not to measure

phenomena, but to grasp a complex structure of interactions. In a complicated system such as Christianity, some ideas may promote population growth directly, others retard it directly, and others affect it indirectly. The particular groups accepting the ideas will emphasize different ideas. The ideas themselves will not constitute a constant, but will develop, reflecting the experience of those affected. One can scarcely speak of measurement. What is sought is insight. One does not seek a standard and a kind of proof irrelevant to the questions asked. To agree to omit the influence of noneconomic ideas in any history of human population because the calculation of their effect is not statistical must be regarded as an arbitrary cutting off of evidence, an inadequate depiction of human action.

Apart from the interaction of ideas with population history, demography itself depends on a number of theoretical assumptions. Any effort to view demography as a pure science of measurement necessarily neglects to take critically into account the notions of intellectual history which honeycomb demographic enterprises. What constitutes a village or a nation or the human race itself is a matter of theory. Unless one believes that a social, religious, political, or geographical grouping has theoretical significance, it is difficult to see why the figures of a given community are tabulated. The selection of what group will be studied is not a matter of tabulation, and yet this decision to choose, to isolate, to describe a particular slice of population is decisive for demography. Even in the fundamental task of tabulation, then, there is no pure demography of numbers; the data are always determined by particular purposes; a set of social, moral, political, and scientific interests frames the determinations made.

If this dependence of demography on theory exists in the examination of the births and deaths of human beings, it becomes accentuated when other categories are introduced as relevant. The simplest additional category is marriage. What is a marriage is determined by a legal, religious, or social standard, and the demographer may either take the standard used in the records given him or uniformly apply a social standard such as "a union lasting for a certain duration." In either case, he has to impose on the rough flow of human interactions a pattern which he deems significant for his purpose. By supposing that what he accepts as marriage has some

relation to births, he necessarily ventures into the realm of causality, theory, and intellectual history.

II

The ideas most relevant to population in Western society are of a mythic-moral character. By *ideas* I mean beliefs, concepts, and valuations; by *mythic* I mean ideas, nondemonstrable but not necessarily untrue, of the nature of the cosmos in relation to the destiny of man; and by *moral* I mean prescriptions for human conduct in terms of a good. Of these mythic-moral ideas the most obviously relevant are those which assign a value to population. There is, for example, the belief advanced in the Babylonian Talmud that there is a certain number of souls waiting to be born, and that until they are born, the Messiah will not come.¹ There is the belief that procreation is necessary in order to perpetuate the race until the Messiah does come.² There are the thoughts, current since St. Augustine's time, that the population of heaven has been depleted by the fall of the angels and that this depopulation must be met by human efforts at procreation, "lest heaven be cheated of its number of citizens."³ There is the belief of a minority of the fathers that the Kingdom of God expands by procreation.⁴ There is the belief in countries divided by the Reformation, that the triumph of a faith depends on the birth rate of its followers.⁵ In all of these views, population itself is a positive value.

Other mythic-moral views assign a negative value to population. There is the belief, current among Gnostic and Orthodox Christians of the second century, that "the world is full": the optimum and maximum number of the redeemed exist; the Messiah has come; there is no need to continue the procreation of the race.⁶ There is the even more severe view of the Manichees that the most sinful of deeds is the procreative act: it perpetuates in new human beings the imprisonment of the light particles, once parts of the Princes of Light, who should be liberated from the flesh to journey to the Father of Lights.⁷

A mythic-moral view need not be expressed in religious imagery. The ancient Greek view of procreation as an answer to death—the view that man lives in his descendants—had no such explicit imagery;⁸ this belief is doubtless held by many nonreligious persons

today. Modern valuations of population sometimes depend on the belief that procreation either does or does not serve "the nation," taken as an ultimate reality: Nazi Germany and postwar Japan are obvious alternative examples. Some contemporary American thought reflects the belief, common to almost all utopian literature, that a static population is best suited to human needs because it is so amenable to rational planning; in this thought, an ideal society on earth performs the function of setting population standards that Augustine once attributed to the population of heaven.

Relevant ideas need not contain direct statements on the value of population or the ends of procreation. Of almost equal immediacy to population size are ideas on marriage and sexual behavior, on celibacy, chastity, virginity, and widowhood. The special ideas of patristic Christianity, for example, form a cluster here. Celibacy as such is not valued, but marriage is not presented as the optimum state; chaste celibacy is preferred.⁹ Widowhood is assigned a high value.¹⁰ Marriage is presented as the sole framework in which sexual intercourse may occur.¹¹ Within marriage, value is given to sexual continence, even to perpetual continence.¹² All of these valuations, if put into practice, affect the likelihood of opportunities for procreative acts. They may be contrasted in their probable effects with the Old Testament ethic, where marriage is the norm, virginity is to be kept only as a condition of a girl prior to marriage, there is no word for bachelor, and widowhood is diminished by the levirate law.¹³

The ideal content of marriage is also of substantial relevance. Consider the Christian goals of offspring, fidelity, and indissolubility in marriage. That monogamy alone is permissible, that slave concubinage to produce an heir may not be practiced, that divorce cannot be had for sterility are formal tenets of the Latin Christian fathers.¹⁴ These beliefs seem to reduce the occasions for procreation and, thus, affect the growth of population. On the other hand, the classic Christian authors of the West insist that the purpose of marriage is procreation, and they hold legitimate only the seeking of marital intercourse for procreative purposes. They condemn contraception and abortion.¹⁵ In these ways, Christian rules favor the growth of population.

In addition to ideas on sexual conduct, ideas on education may affect population. All people rear their children, giving them both physical nourishment and some social training. That the rearing of

children should include both intellectual and moral formation is not necessarily a given; the idea of such education is the acceptance of an option valuing the quality of offspring. The Christian theologians of the second century adopted the *paideia* of the Greeks and developed these Greek educational ideas in a new context.¹⁶ As a result, Christians affected by this tradition were taught to value not the quantity of their children, but their quality; value was assigned not to offspring as such, but to offspring as the objects of a religious education.¹⁷ The patristic teaching was reaffirmed in the changed culture of the Middle Ages. To seek children on a natural level, Thomas Aquinas taught, was formally sinful; only children who were to be formed spiritually constituted a good in marriage.¹⁸ By defining the purpose of marriage as comprising both the procreation and the education of offspring, such classic Christian formulas produced an inherent tension. Pursuit of one goal always held the possibility of endangering the other. It was always a question of how the balance was to be preserved. The answers to this question related to the growth of population.

Another set of valuations relevant to population has centered on the rules determining freedom to marry. These rules define who can choose the spouses, what classes are eligible for marriage, when girls and boys can marry, and how marriages are made. Roman legislation presented marriage as an important social act for upper-class families, open to imitation by the lower classes, and denied to slaves.¹⁹ The model of Christian marriage presented by the Epistle to the Ephesians was that of a free and loving union open to any Christian.²⁰ This model was in sharp conflict with the social norms in the early Christian centuries.

Gratian's teaching that a girl could not be compelled to marry against her will marked a distinct development in European history.²¹ Very gradually, in a society where arranged matches were still the model furnished by the upper classes, the principle of freedom was applied by church courts.²² A milestone was reached when the Council of Trent affirmed explicitly that the consent of parents was not necessary for the validity of a marriage; such marriages could still be illicit, but the great sanction of invalidity was definitively removed.²³ Yet in many European societies (such as rural Ireland following the famine of 1845), the parents' control of marriage could still be decisive.²⁴

Canon law challenged the legal restrictions on slave marriages during the twelfth century.²⁵ Until the end of the nineteenth century, however, the practical social restrictions on slaves and then on servants inhibited freedom to marry. Economic class lines remained strong into the present century, and racial lines still dominate contemporary patterns. Yet in theory, and substantially in fact, the transition from the Roman model of marriage as a family affair for upper-class men and women to marriage as a personal choice open to everyone has been generally made in the United States and Western Europe.²⁶

The Council of Trent channeled marriage toward greater control by the Church. Before Trent, marriages could be illicitly but validly contracted by the parties themselves. After Trent, only consent exchanged before the parish priest of one of the parties constituted a valid marriage.²⁷ This sixteenth-century increase in social ecclesiastical control may have coincided with the beginning of an increase in the age at marriage. (Age fourteen for boys and twelve for girls had been established by Roman law and accepted by canon law.) The actual rise in the legal age itself, however, followed the development of a practice of late marriage. Here nineteenth-century European governments set the pattern and were followed by the Catholic church only in 1917.²⁸ Nineteenth-century secular legislators and twentieth-century church legislation also swept away many of the restrictions, established by the old canon law, against marriage within certain degrees of relationship and against marriages of mixed religion. There was, paradoxically, increasing freedom to choose and increasing restriction on the age when choice might be made and on the method of expressing consent.

The demographic impact of these changing rules was doubtless mixed. A system of arranged marriages is theoretically more efficient in making sure that everyone gets married than is a system of personal choice. If, however, an important objective of the arranged marriages is to control the devolution of property, the system may function to promote only the marriages of heirs, as it did among landed groups in Europe. A rise in the age of marriage necessarily means that fewer people are physically present to marry, and that the period of marital fecundity will necessarily be reduced. Yet families marrying later may be more stable and seek to have larger numbers of children. Increase in the valuation put on the interpersonal goals of

marriage decreases the value of the procreative good. Persons marrying freely may, however, have a greater interest in having children and nurturing them to maturity. The rules adopted do not, taken alone, afford a basis for estimating the net impact on population. All that is evident is the likely relevance to demographic history of the changing norms.

Of all moral concepts I suppose that the most basic is the concept of person—an individual who is entitled to be treated as I am, who has a self-determined end, who cannot be regarded as a thing. “Person” as an explicit concept has had a long and slow development. Many of the major moral controversies of the past can be analyzed in terms of who has been recognized as a person. Are aliens persons? Are prisoners, are slaves, are Negroes, are women, are infants, are embryos? Different answers to these questions have affected population history. Nonpersons have often either been exterminated or restricted in their opportunities to procreate. Prisoners, for example, have almost never been treated as persons; in ancient times, this response to them resulted in their total elimination from the population.²⁹ In all societies, prisoners have been restricted or prohibited from expressing their procreative desires. Infants and embryos were viewed as nonpersons in the Roman world and, as such, were subject to destruction on a wide scale.³⁰ That women were less than persons was reflected in the long acceptance of prostitution with the concomitant of contraception practiced by the prostitutes. The willingness to have an economy where many servants were not expected to marry has existed in many societies nurturing the class belief that only people of a given status are persons. The enactment of miscegenation laws and the consequent restriction of procreative marital opportunities have been based, in part, on a belief that given races are less than fully human.

Who will count as a person is not assured or given. Attribution of personhood may be affected by racial, religious, political, biological, economic, psychological, or social ideas. The literary lesson of 1984—that persons may in their own lives become unpersons—is brought to contemporary life by the Chinese Communists’ treatment of members of the counterrevolutionary classes. The perception of persons is a function of ideas about humanity; on this perception have hinged the generative opportunities and the existence of substantial numbers of the population.

To determine that ideas have been held on population, procreation, chastity, sterility, education, freedom to marry, and persons—all of which evidently bear in a theoretical way on demographic questions—is not to determine that these ideas have been followed or, if followed, that they have been influential. There are at least three further questions to be asked: How have the ideas been diffused? How have they been accepted? To what extent have they modified one another or been affected by other factors?

In answering the first question, it is evident that there is interaction between the actual behavior of any group and the ideas proposed to it as models by its leaders, teachers, or legislators. There may also be interaction between the pattern of those ideas so firmly established as to be unself-consciously held as folkways and that of the ideas proposed as new and better models by moral philosophers, prophets, or critics. In the history of Western thought on sexual conduct, two examples may suffice. Jesus teaches an equality between man and woman in the right to fidelity of a spouse (Matthew 19.9), when he applies “adultery” to a man’s sexual conduct with a hitherto unmarried woman; a similar equality of sexual rights in marriage is enunciated by Paul in the First Episode to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 7.3–5). This idea of sexual equality was counter to current behavior in the Mediterranean world. One striking example of the resistance of the popular culture to this idea is furnished by the Roman divorce legislation enacted in 331 under Christian auspices by Constantine. The legislation makes adultery by a wife ground for divorce, but explicitly provides that a husband’s being a “womanizer” (*muliercularius*) is no ground.³¹ The ideal of equality is thus repulsed even at the level of formal law. It is only in the twelfth century that canon law sets out the idea as at least a legal norm for the church courts,³² and this legal proclamation is, of course, merely the beginning of the influence of the idea on behavior.

A second example is the view that there is a natural position in sexual intercourse. There is nothing in Scripture on this subject, and the Greeks and Romans do not seem to have had any strong notions about it. Beginning with the penitentials of the seventh century, however, a belief appeared that there is only one lawful position, that of the man above the woman.³³ The belief must arise from some Anglo-Saxon folkway, for no other source is apparent. The rule was then accepted by the later Scholastic theologians and persisted as a

norm till well into the fifteenth century.³⁴ The case is an instance of a model being taken from the belief or practice of one group of unsophisticated people and then generalized as an ideal.

These examples show that it would be an effort to postulate a straight lineal relation of ideas proposed by moral teachers to the behavior of those taught. Yet in the area of sexual conduct, the ignorance of individuals has been very great as to what is "normal" or "right." The channels of communication have often been controlled, and high social importance has usually been attached to the basic norms of the society. In such a context, the confident setting out by leaders of certain patterns as correct has influenced behavior, however much instinct or folkway has modified their ideas. Most behavior here has been learned, however unself-consciously the learning has been carried on. Relatively small groups have concerned themselves with this conduct; they have conveyed knowledge, exemplified ideals, enacted laws, and, thus, have affected larger groups. Their impact has necessarily been in the long run, with a time lag of short or long duration. In general, however, a large degree of rationality has not entered into the decisions of individuals when answering such questions as, Shall I get married? How many children shall I have? Shall I determine whom my child marries? These questions have been answered by individuals within existing structures governing sexuality, the conditions of education, and the concept of person. Through these structures, which reflect ideas modified by behavior, instinct, and earlier structure, ideas have influenced behavior. The ideas, whose dissemination is to be traced, come from both the earlier structures and the moral leaders and critics.

For the West, ideas on population from both sources have been conveyed by liturgical acts, especially the marriage service and the Sacrament of penance; by didactic forms, particularly parental homily, preaching, catechism, and elementary schooling; by imaginative literature; by law, both canon and secular, acting as much as standard setter as sanction applier; and by personal example. By examining these multiple sources, the broad lines of diffusion of ideas may be surveyed and some estimates made as to how the ideas have been disseminated.

The second question, the extent of acceptance, is more difficult to answer. It would evidently be a mistake to measure the force of an

idea by its probability to us; its power depends on its hold on the person receiving it. A bare cataloguing of relevant mythic-moral ideas such as I have attempted in this paper is apt to seem unreal; the ideas appear as illusory, unlikely, bizarre. Their persuasive power has to be measured in the situations to which they were responsive, in the cultures in which they were embedded.

Within the historical situation of the cultures, there have been different levels of acceptance. The gospel parable of the seed and the various soils is aptly applied to the audience of any idea. There is always a range of attitudes—from impassioned conviction to sullen compliance to open defiance. A variety of investigative means is necessary to arrive at estimates of the hearers' adherence to any given concept or valuation.

In the area of religious ideas, the crudest of tools has been the label *Catholic* or *Protestant*. The labels appear to be of some use for seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe, but applied to contemporary societies, they are survivals of post-Reformation controversy. They have been of great interest to religious polemicists intent on attributing all the character of a country to its creed. They have been maintained in currency by ecclesiastical leaders anxious to claim as adherents 99 percent of a country and are perpetuated by newspapers and magazines which find it paradoxical that a country can be 99 percent Catholic and vote 30 percent Communist.

More meaningful efforts have been made to measure religious beliefs not by the nominal classification of an ecclesiastical census, but by liturgical practice. For Catholics, the most common criterion has been attendance at Mass; sometimes the more substantial index of frequency of confession or communion has been used. These tests are helpful in a negative way. If a person never attends Mass, it is unlikely that other specifically Catholic concepts are familiar to him. These criteria are, however, inadequate to determine if specifically Catholic concepts relating to population and procreation have been transmitted to the group investigated. Ideas are not magically imparted by a liturgical action; there must be teaching, literal or symbolic, linking the liturgical acts to particular valuations. Consequently, to measure dissemination of an idea, the means used to transmit it must be ascertained and the frequency of exposure to these means determined. Only after such determination has been made can it be said that the label *Catholic* includes for the group investigated

the clusters of concepts and valuations that formal doctrine embraces.³⁵

This second question, the determination of acceptance, imperceptibly melts into the third and most difficult question, the extent to which the idea has been affected by other factors. A thousand personal circumstances bear on the way an individual receives an idea. Yet it is supposed, with some foundation where ideas of a religious character are concerned, that individuals may be grouped by social class, occupation, ethnic origin, political boundaries, historical experience, age, and geographic location. Such groupings will be relevant not only in determining the dissemination of ideas, but in estimating the probable hold of the ideas on those hearing them. Definition in terms of these seven major variables yields groups whose responsiveness to particular kinds of mythic-moral ideas may be gauged.³⁶

Yet ideas are never received singly, and they are never received unchangingly. When they appear as part of a system, a complex of related concepts is imparted: the concepts balance, constrain, or modify one another. In this dynamic tension, development may be expected. It cannot be determined *a priori* which ideas will be dominant or which ideas will develop. Specific ideas on population and sexuality are only a part of a larger mass of ideas. A theology's concept of sin, for example, may be as relevant as its concept of marriage. The popular culture's approach to leisure may have as much effect on demography as its view of women. The organization—ecclesiastical, political, educational—conveying the ideas may have enormous impact on both the shape of the ideas and the weight attached to them. Study of ideas does not exclude attention to the organizational, cultural, and broader theological or philosophical framework, but depends on a consideration of the interrelations among them.

To take the Christian example, who could say in advance that the model of the one-child family presented by the Holy Family would be more or less important than the Christian fathers' Stoic doctrine on the procreative purpose of the sexual faculties? Who could suppose that of the three classic goods of marriage—offspring, fidelity, indissolubility—fidelity would be given less weight in Latin Catholic countries than procreation? Who could determine that education or procreation would be preferred in case of conflict? To say that one

value or the other should have prevailed is to theologize. In writing history, one can only point to the existence of balancing ideas in a system and then investigate which ones became dominant in the local experience of the particular group examined.

If a group is defined by its multiple nonideological characteristics, if the dissemination of ideas to that group is determined, and if the dominant ideas are observed with allowance both for the counter-acting force of other ideas in the system and for their own development, it seems possible to relate the effect of the ideas received to the population history of the group. Such a relation will only be a matter of reasonable hypothesis. To use these reasonable hypotheses, to take them into account as factors in population history, seems to me preferable to writing a history that, by ignoring all but the economic factors, tacitly supposes that economic rationality alone is real.

III

Three examples may serve to illustrate how demographic history might be enriched by more attention to intellectual history. First, consider the increase of abortion in Hungary in the 1950s. Therapeutic abortion boards were established in Hungary in 1952. On June 3, 1956, the principle of abortion on demand was legally established. Describing these two legal events, Christopher Tietze asks: "What has been the effect of the legalization of abortion in Hungary?"³⁷ He then provides the following figures:

	Abortions per 1,000 of Population	
	<i>Legal Abortions</i>	<i>Other Abortions</i>
1949	.2	3.4
1952	.2	4.4
1955	3.6	4.4
1956	8.3	4.2
1957	12.5	4.0

The only factors correlated by Tietze with this striking increase in abortion are the changes in the law. These legal changes are surely relevant, but laws are signs of ideas as well as causes in themselves.

The spread of communism among Hungarian workers, the suppression of the religious orders and most religious instruction, the increasing desperation of elements of the population in the mid-fifties, the ideas that burst into action in the October 1956 revolution, the ideas that were generated by the failure of the revolution—all these intellectual events are also relevant. The two legal events afford a misleading account of the changes in the behavior pattern unless they are placed in the context of this political and intellectual ferment.

Secondly, consider a larger example: the demographic history of Ireland before the famine. In *The Population of Ireland, 1750–1845*, K. H. Connell estimates the Irish population at something over four million in 1781, postulates its doubling (despite substantial emigration) by the time of the great famine, and hypothesizes that the population increase was due to substantially earlier marriages.³⁸ He then gives reasons for earlier marriages in largely economic terms. The cultivation of the bog, the swing from pasture to arable land, the increase of agricultural exports, the general dependence of the natives on the potato, and the subdivision of holdings made early settlements of estates possible and therefore promoted marriage for men at age twenty or twenty-one;³⁹ the early marriages resulted in the population increase. He adds that “children were wanted because of their unusual value to their parents” as cultivators of the land.⁴⁰ The population increase was higher in counties like Connaught than in counties like Leinster: Connell makes the supposition that a near-subsistence economy in Connaught encouraged the improvidence of early marriage more than the greater prosperity of Leinster.⁴¹ His general hypothesis is that greater prosperity stimulated marriages and births, but that when a certain level of prosperity was reached, other economic calculations led to some postponement of marriage and a consequent slight decline in the birth rate.

That many people married as early as age twenty in prefamine Ireland is doubted by Michael Drake. The Malthusian beliefs of literate observers, he suggests, often lead them to see early marriages as the cause of poverty, but their casual observations are not decisive. Nor can travelers’ exclamations at low ages in exceptional cases be taken as evidence of a trend.⁴² The census of 1841 shows that the median age of bridegrooms in the 1830s must have been twenty-five, and there is no substantial evidence showing that it was earlier in the two generations before 1830.⁴³ Drake suggests instead that the

population increase was due to the spread of a potato diet between 1740 and 1780, which resulted in a lowering of mortality and a substantial increase in fecundity.⁴⁴

This controversy between Connell and Drake has been properly conducted in terms of the meaning of the census and observer evidence. When causes for change or stability are to be postulated, however, there also seem to be political and intellectual events relevant to a history which gives reasons as well as numbers. The period described by Connell is the beginning of the resurgence of the Irish nation after a century of colonial domination. Its beginning is marked legally by such enactments as the Bogland Act of 1771 permitting some land leasing by Catholics; the recognition of legal rights thus begun culminates in the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829. The laws are both the effects of changing political ideas and the causes of new changes. The abortive revolt of 1798 is both a sign of desperation and a cause for despair of successful violence. Connell relates the effects of the Grattan parliament and the Napoleonic wars solely to the increased economic activity. He describes Catholic emancipation only in terms of its effect in making possible a Catholic middle class. He refrains from any suppositions about the effect the political changes had on thought affecting marriages and births. That the ideas which necessitated political change had repercussions on attitudes toward population does not, however, seem improbable. To consider only the economic effect of such major political and ideological changes in a country stirring with the consciousness of its oppression seems to shut out evidence of potential significance to the history of the birth rate.

The relation of religious ideas to the population increase also seems worthy of consideration. In the mid-eighteenth century, the outlawed bishops lived the lives of itinerants staying in "places of refuge";⁴⁵ the parishes were irregularly supplied; the religious orders were criminal; Catholic education consisted in the uncertain efforts of the "ledge schools."⁴⁶ Clerical candidates (some 480 in all)⁴⁷ were educated abroad without reference to the language or history of their country and could not have provided more than seventy new priests a year.⁴⁸ Priests had little secular influence on their flocks.⁴⁹ A change was already under way by 1782 when the Catholic Relief Act was enacted, permitting Catholic churches to be built within towns, Catholic bishops and members of religious orders to live in Ireland,

and Catholics to teach school if licensed by a Church of Ireland minister. Seventy years later, by 1850, the bishops were a powerful body firmly based on domestic soil; the national seminary, St. Patrick's College at Maynooth, had supplied 1,272 of the 2,291 Irish clergy; the parishes were well staffed, the religious orders thriving; Catholic churches were openly and legally attended; an effort at Catholic elementary education had begun.⁵⁰ The Maynooth priest had become the dominant figure in the villages and small towns. He was now, a friendly writer declares, "the teacher, the guide, and the counsellor of his people, their leader in social and political movements, the center of their energies, the focus of their power, the exponent of their ways, the moderator of their excesses."⁵¹ Did such powerful local leaders have no effect on attitudes toward marriage and toward birth?

The formal ideas of the Irish clergy on sexual morality underwent no change in this period. In the eighteenth century, 75 percent of them had been educated in France and another 15 percent in the Low Countries.⁵² Rigorism in morals dominated the seminaries of these countries. When Maynooth was founded, the same traditions were continued. The first professor of moral theology was a Frenchman, Louis De la Hogue (1798–1801), followed by an Irish graduate of Paris, Edward Ferris (1801–1809), followed by another Frenchman, Francis Anglade (1810–1828). These men devoutly maintained Augustinian sexual teachings as the law of God.⁵³ The textbooks in use, Antoine and Bailly, were among the most severe of moral treatises. The theory expounded by these books and by these professors condemned any premarital sexual activity, restricted sexual initiatives in marriage to the procreative act, and viewed the whole sexual area of human life as peculiarly prone to concupiscence and actual sin.

Some of the ideas thus conveyed favored marriage and procreation. The restriction of lawful sexual activity to marriage encouraged marriage if it was economically feasible. The view that marriage was meant for procreation encouraged copulation for population in marriage.⁵⁴ Contraception and abortion were shunned. Values counter to early marriage and procreation were, however, also being transmitted. The attitude on sexual activity before marriage discouraged courtship and the occasions for the social meetings of boys and girls. Sexual incontinence was sternly rebuked.⁵⁵ A sterile wife was a disaster, but the expedient of some peasant societies of establishing a

woman's fertility in premarital intercourse was not adopted.⁵⁶ The narrow limits placed on sexual activity in marriage, the insistence on the indissolubility of a marriage once made, and the high premium put on chaste celibacy all worked against any acceptance of early marriage as an eminently desirable state. Copulation control was itself a form of population control in diminishing the number of chances in which conception could occur. The valuation the clergy placed on the education of children, reflected in the strenuous efforts to establish Catholic schools, embodied an approach to childbearing that stressed quality as well as quantity of offspring.⁵⁷ In all these ideas discouraging early marriage and early procreation, Ireland is but a more pronounced case of the Western European marriage pattern, which I shall set out as my third example.

Can one conclude from the existence of ideas working both for and against early marriage that they canceled one another out? Such an approach would seem unduly mechanical, insufficiently sensitive to the dominant trends of the period. Connell, however, only remarks that the people were reputed to be continent, that they believed in marriage, and that they did not practice contraception. Otherwise he attempts no correlation of moral ideas and demographic history. His later account of peasant marriage after the famine focuses on the economic motives for marriage; and in the one place where he mentions moral attitudes, clerical discouragement of courting is seen as a reinforcement of the economic desire to postpone marriage.⁵⁸ His view of the peasant would suggest that the economic aspects of life so effectively controlled decisions on marriage that the moral framework was relevant. Alternatively, he may have assumed that, as the moral ideas were unchanged throughout the period studied, they might safely be ignored as a factor causing change.

There was, indeed, in the period 1750–1845, no change in the formal ideas imparted to the Irish clergy and presumably no change in the ideas of sexual morality actually conveyed by them to the people. There was, however, a change in the role, training, numbers, and importance of the priests, a change noticeable some time before 1782 and marked after the foundation of Maynooth in 1798. This change in the status of the conveyors of teaching on sexual behavior is a factor that cannot be treated as nonexistent.

In this short compass, the impact of the ideas conveyed by the clergy can only be raised as a possibility. Parish by parish information

would be necessary to trace the effect definitively. Nevertheless, it seems relevant to population history to inquire if this clerical influence helped to establish a pattern of increasingly later marriages well before the famine. The lower birth rate of Leinster, for example, might be associated not only with economic prosperity, but with more extensive efforts on the part of clerics to educate the people. An account of Irish population changes that does not consider the net effect of ideas favoring and discouraging marital procreation seems to have the burden of showing the irrelevance of the ideological elements in an era when this complex of ideas was being conveyed with increasing vigor, by an increasingly strong ministry, to people responsive to ecclesiastical leadership.

My third example is the relation of marriage in Western Europe to the Christian ethic. Hajnal pointed to the existence of a marriage pattern in Western Europe distinct from that in Eastern Europe, Asia, or Africa.⁵⁹ The picture drawn by him is now being confirmed by the detailed studies of Ansley Coale and his associates.⁶⁰ The pattern is that of a society distinguished by two features: marriages for both men and women occur at a relatively late average age; many persons do not marry. In these two aspects, Western Europe is distinguished from societies where almost everyone gets married and almost everyone gets married by age nineteen or twenty. This distinctive pattern begins to develop slowly in Europe, probably by at least the seventeenth century; it is strongest in nineteenth-century Europe, where Coale's work, based on census reports, is able to show fluctuations on a province basis. It is common to both "Catholic" and "Protestant" countries, but not to Eastern Orthodox countries. It obtains more or less regardless of an area's degree of industrialization. It is specific enough to Western Europe and general enough within Western Europe to ask for an explanation that will fit Western Europe as a unit. A hypothesis, then, is needed that is not related to sectarian religious differences, nor to exclusively economic factors, nor to specifically national characteristics. Such a hypothesis is one relating the pattern to the cluster of ideas constituting Western Christian sexual morality.

These ideas are sixfold: the confinement of sexual intercourse to marriage, the treatment of marriage as monogamous, the emphasis on the ideal marriage as permanent, the justification of marital

intercourse by procreative purpose, the condemnation of contraception and abortion, the insistence on the education of children. These central Christian ideas were present, with slightly different emphases, in both Catholic and Protestant cultures.⁶¹ They combined to encourage both sexual restraint and postponement of the serious step of entering marriage and raising a family. They operated against the background of a religion whose founder was presented as celibate. They produced a very different approach to marriage than that of, say, the talmudic teaching to marry young in order to avoid impure desires or the secular injunction to marry young to ensure heirs to one's property. They did not, of course, operate alone; they were reinforced by other ideological, political, economic, and physical influences; nevertheless, they were the common denominator upon which other influences produced variations without altering the basic pattern.

Negative confirmation of this hypothesis is found in the changes which had already begun to occur at the end of the nineteenth century. By then, for example, in the most anticlerical portions of France, the marriage age had fallen significantly as had the fertility per marriage.⁶² In these areas the relevant ideas on desirable morality had been rejected or partially rejected by the populace. The Western European pattern changed more generally in the next sixty years. This development corresponded both to a rejection of Christian ideas by much of Western mankind and to changes, such as the acceptance of contraception by the Protestant churches, in the formal Christian ideas themselves.

Why did the pattern occur in post-Reformation rather than in medieval Europe? The timing reflects the time lag between the acceptance of ideas by the moral teachers of Europe and their diffusion by law, literature, liturgy, preaching, and example. Only in post-Reformation Europe did the education of a parish clergy in both Catholic and Protestant countries assure the dissemination of the formal ideas.⁶³ To take two other instances of this kind of time lag, it has been argued that the witchcraft hysteria of the late-fifteenth and early-sixteenth centuries reflected the effect of the preceding several centuries of theological work in elaborating a theory of witchcraft and providing detailed information on the behavior of witches.⁶⁴ The virulent outbreak of anti-Semitism in twentieth-century Germany has been related to the conditioning of attitudes by centuries of Christian

theologizing in which the Jews played the roles of scapegoats or villains.⁶⁵ In both these cases, the theological notions involved were relatively peripheral to the main body of doctrine—indeed, were contradictory to more central Christian ideas. Yet it is plausibly contended that witchcraft theory and anti-Semitic theology, detached from the central Christian concepts, powerfully affected popular behavior centuries after the ideas were put forward by the theological elite. If peripheral elements of Christian theology could work so strikingly for ill in these popular manifestations, it is not unreasonable to suppose that more central ideas operated with profound, if delayed, effect on European behavior to influence sexual conduct along the main lines to which the Christian moralists had so seriously committed themselves.

Why was there such a marked difference between Western and Eastern Europe? One factor to explain this difference might be found in the greater vitality of the parish ministry in the West and the greater interest of the Western clergy in affecting moral conduct. The institutions of preaching in the Protestant countries and of confession in the Catholic countries were not matched in the East. A tendency to restrict asceticism to the monasteries and a relatively more tranquil acceptance of human failings in the secular Christian also marked the Orthodox of the East. In addition, two doctrines were treated differently in the East: divorce was accepted, and the procreative purpose of intercourse was not stressed. In sum, both the complex of ideas on sex and marriage and their communication were significantly different in the hands of the Orthodox. The differences, when combined with many nonideological factors, help to explain the different pattern.

The general hypothesis of any relationship between the formal Christian ideas and the Western European pattern and my answers to specific difficulties with this hypothesis are put forward only tentatively. I hope that they are plausible enough at first sight to provoke refutation or confirmation. They may serve, at least, to suggest the relevance of intellectual history to a specific demographic pattern.

It has been the discovery of the historians of legal institutions that such history cannot be written without more attention to general cultural and political factors than they were at first prepared to give.

Demographic history would seem likely to undergo a similar expansion of its concerns. What it has to deal with is evidence of human behavior. That behavior points to thoughts. To account for that evidence, to integrate it, to understand it require a history not only of births and deaths, but of ideas, if the history is to be a history of men.

ENDNOTES

¹Niddah 13B, *The Babylonian Talmud*, ed. Isidore Epstein (London, 1935–1952).

²See Eusebius, *The Gospel Demonstration* 1.9, *Patrologia graeca* (hereafter PG) 22: 77–81.

³St. Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 22.1, *Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum* (hereafter CSEL) 40:583; again in Duns Scotus, *In libros sententiarum*, Paris Report, 4.28.

⁴St. Ambrose, *Expositio in evangelium Lucae*, 1.30, CSEL, 32⁴:29.

⁵For a twentieth-century expression of this belief, see John A. Ryan, "The Moral Aspects of Periodical Continence," *Ecclesiastical Review* 89 (1933):34.

⁶See St. Jerome, *Contra Helvidium* 21, *Patrologia latina* (hereafter PL) 23:215.

⁷See St. Augustine, *Contra epistolam quam vocant fundamenti* 5, 13, 15, CSEL 25¹: 197, 209, 212.

⁸See St. John Chrysostom, *On Those Words of the Apostle "On Account of Fornication,"* 3, PG 51:213.

⁹First Epistle to the Corinthians 7:7.

¹⁰E.g., St. Ambrose, *De virginibus*, 1.23, 38, 52, PL, 16:195, 199, 203.

¹¹Matthew 5:27–28; Romans 1:24–27; First Epistle to the Corinthians 6:16; First Epistle to the Thessalonians 4:4.

¹²E.g., Canon 33 of the Council of Elvira in 306 forbids priests to have intercourse with their wives: *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, ed. G. D. Mansi (hereafter Mansi), 2.11.

¹³See Lucien Legrand, *The Biblical Doctrine of Virginity*, 29.

¹⁴See St. Augustine, *De bono coniugali* 7, 29, CSEL 41:196, 227.

¹⁵On procreative purpose, see Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus* 2.10.95.3, *Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte* (hereafter GCS) 12:214. On abortion, see the *Didache*, 5.2.

¹⁶See Werner Jaeger, *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia* (1961), 37–67.

¹⁷Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 3:15, GCS 15:241; St. Augustine, *De bono coniugali* 8.8, CSEL 41:198.

¹⁸St. Thomas Aquinas, *In libros sententiarum Petri Lombardi* 4.31.2.2, reply to objection.

¹⁹*Codex Justiniani* 5.5.3, 9.11.1.

²⁰Epistle to the Ephesians 5:25–33.

²¹Gratian, *Decretum*, pt. 2, C.32, Q.2, c.1, in *Corpus juris canonici*, ed. Friedberg (1879–1881).

²²See, e.g., *Decretales* 4.1.15, 21, 29, *Corpus juris canonici*.

²³Council of Trent, Session 24, 11 November 1563, "Canones super reformatione circa matrimonium," c.1, "Tametsi," *Concilium Tridentinum*, vol. 9 (ed. Societas Goerresiana, 1955), 968.

- ²⁴K. H. Connell, "Peasant Marriage in Ireland: Its Structure and Development Since the Famine," *Economic History Review*, 2d series, vol. 14 (1961–1962):513.
- ²⁵Gratian, *Decretum*, pt. 2, C.29, Q.2, c.1.
- ²⁶As is suggested by studies, such as Alain Girard's, the actual range of choice, at least as those now married recalled the range they had, may still be small. The family will play a role by implicitly approving the decision made. See Girard, *Le choix du conjoint* (1964), 128, 156.
- ²⁷*Ibid.*, note 23 *supra*.
- ²⁸*Codex canonici juris*, canon 1067.
- ²⁹E.g., Joshua, 11:8.
- ³⁰See Tertullian, *Ad nationes*, 1.15, CSEL 20:85; Seneca, *De ira*, 1.15.
- ³¹*Codex Theodosianus*, ed. T. Mommsen (Berlin, 1885), 3.18.1.
- ³²Gratian, *Decretum*, pt. 2, C.32, Q.4, c.1–10.
- ³³St. Bede, *Penitential*, 3.38; Egbert, *Penitential* 7.16, *Die Bussordnungen der abendlandischen Kirche*, ed. F. W. H. Wasserschleben (Hulle, 1851).
- ³⁴E.g., St. Bernardine, *De religione christiana*, 17.1.1 in *Opera omnia* (Quarrachi, 1950), vol. 1.
- ³⁵For example, a recent study of abortion in Chile makes an effort to correlate mass going, confession going, reception of the Eucharist, and the practice of abortion, but it makes no examination of the dissemination of the Church's teaching on abortion. See Mariano Requena, "Social and Economic Correlation of Induced Abortion in Santiago, Chile," *Demography* 2 (1965):41.
- ³⁶See Gabriel Le Bras, *Etudes de sociologie religieuse* 2 (1956): 547–653. Substantially the same point is made by Louis Chevalier, "Towards a History of Population," *Population in History*, ed. D. V. Glass and D. E. C. Eversley, 75, reprinted from *Population* (1946).
- ³⁷Christopher Tietze, "The Demographic Significance of Legal Abortion in Eastern Europe," *Demography* 1 (1964):123.
- ³⁸K. H. Connell, *The Population of Ireland, 1750–1845*, 51.
- ³⁹*Ibid.*, 89. Connell speaks of "early" marriage as around age twenty or twenty-one for men in "Marriage in Ireland After the Famine: The Diffusion of the Match," *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland* 19 (1955–1956): 82–83.
- ⁴⁰*The Population of Ireland, 1750–1845*, 246.
- ⁴¹*Ibid.*, 249.
- ⁴²Michael Drake, "Marriage and Population Growth in Ireland, 1740–1843," *Economic History Review*, 2d series, vol. 16 (1963–1964):303–05.
- ⁴³*Ibid.*, 303, 311.
- ⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 311–12.
- ⁴⁵See, e.g., the letters of eighteenth-century bishops of Meath in A. Cogan, *The Diocese of Meath*, vol. 3 (1867), 166.
- ⁴⁶For contemporary comment on the efforts at educational reform in the nineteenth century through the suppression of the hedge schools by Catholic bishops, see the letters of James Doyle, Bishop of Kildare to the Earl of Derby, Chief Secretary for Ireland, 13 January 1831, in W. J. Fitzpatrick, *The Life, Times and Correspondence of the Rt. Rev. Dr. Doyle*, vol. 2, 232.
- ⁴⁷See letter of the Secretary of the Trustees of St. Patrick's College, Maynooth to the Under-Secretary in the Civil Department of the Chief Secretary's Office, Dublin Castle, in John Healey, *Maynooth College; Its Centenary History* (1896), 616.

- ⁴⁸The calculation is a rough one. It supposes a distribution over five years of study, and a certain number of ordained priests remaining abroad in chaplaincies.
- ⁴⁹The observation of Edmund Burke, a man perhaps interested in discounting Catholic clerical influences in Ireland, but a generally fair and intelligent observer. See Edmund Burke, *Correspondence*, vol. 3, 34.
- ⁵⁰Healey, 466.
- ⁵¹*Ibid.*, 238.
- ⁵²See letter of the Secretary of the Trustees of St. Patrick's College.
- ⁵³On rigorism at Maynooth, see Healey, 283–84.
- ⁵⁴As James Joyce sees the message conveyed, "Copulation without population! No, say I!" (*Ulysses* [1961 ed.], 423).
- ⁵⁵See, for example, the record of episcopal visitations between 1780 and 1801 of Bishop Plunkett of Meath, in A. Cogan, *The Diocese of Meath*, vol. 3, 300–40. Typically Bishop Plunkett notes in Dunshauglin on 16 August 1801, "scandalous incontinence inveighed against and threatened with the divine vengeance."
- ⁵⁶Connell, "Peasant Marriage in Ireland: Its Structure and Development Since the Famine," 517. Connell's observations made here on postfamine Ireland seem equally true of prefamine Ireland.
- ⁵⁷In the same visitation record of Dunshauglin, referred to in note 55, Bishop Plunkett also denounced "neglect of the Christian education of children." On the bishops' effort for Catholic schools see Fitzpatrick, vol. 2, 232.
- ⁵⁸Connell, "Peasant Marriage in Ireland," 572.
- ⁵⁹J. Hajnal, "European Marriage Patterns in Perspective," *Population in History*, 106.
- ⁶⁰See Ansley Coale, "The Decline of Fertility in Europe from the French Revolution to World War II," paper presented at the Conference on Historical Population Studies, Bellagio, Italy, 7–13 July 1967. The paper will be published with the title "Fertility and Family: A World View," as part of the Sesquicentennial Celebration of the University of Michigan.
- ⁶¹*Catholic* and *Protestant* are used here to denote cultures which have self-consciously different ecclesiastical organizations. The difference in other respects needs close analysis. E.g., in "Protestant" England divorce with right to remarry was not made generally available before the nineteenth century. In some sociological writing there is overemphasis on Weber's concepts of "the Protestant ethic," despite his own later severe qualifications of the idea and his own later approach to the special characteristics of European capitalism in more general terms of a spirit of rationality. See Max Weber, *Wirtschaftsethik der Weltreligionen in Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religions Soziologie* (1920), 536–46.
- ⁶²Coale, "The Decline of Fertility in Europe."
- ⁶³On the very slow development in the seventeenth century of a seminary-educated clergy, see Paul Broutin, *La Réforme pastorale en France au 17e siècle* (1955), 11, 89, 296.
- ⁶⁴Hugh Trevor-Roper, "Witchcraft and Witches," *Encounter* 28 (May 1967):3–25.
- ⁶⁵Georges Friedmann, *The End of the Jewish People?* (English translation, 1967), 268.

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Roger W. Shattuck

Thoughts on the Humanities

A DISCUSSION OF THE HUMANITIES demands that we recognize a few major premises. Here are two.

1. *The faculty of the mind, the power of thinking, is at its seat one and undivided.* Despite a long tradition that recognizes the diversity of the mind's activities and has provided us with polar terms like *reason* and *sensibility*, *logic* and *intuition*, *dialectic* and *poetry*, there exists no telling evidence of an essential division of thought itself. Two of the most powerful minds of this century, Valéry and Freud, turned their attention to Leonardo da Vinci because they saw in him the greatest example in history of this unity given full expression in art and in science. Freud and Valéry also considered themselves equally artists and scientists in a broad sense.

The obviously very different forms of discourse and apprehension we all employ need not be attributed to distinct areas or faculties or types of mind; rather, the mind performs at highly varied speeds and intensities. In speaking of the humanities, we do not refer to any special or limited portion of the total mind. At the source of consciousness there is no fissure. The instantaneous leap of understanding or discovery testifies either to long preparation or exceptional talent. The tremendous velocity of a "creative" mental act does not preclude tracing it through coherent steps that reestablish its continuity. We should not have to refer back to the quadrivium and the trivium to decide that the outward activities of the mind can be

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divided in many ways quite unlike the divisions acceptable to us. Throughout these shifts of emphasis, which fascinated St. Augustine and William James as deeply as Lévi-Strauss, the mind remains one.

2. *Any significant truth is unteachable; only the husk can be conveyed.* It may be that we encounter here a universal law known in biology: Ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny. I know intimately the work of only a few great minds: All of them without exception state or imply in a significant context that each person must learn for himself, from his own experience. There is no substitute. Ignorance or insensitivity to this principle led for centuries to the didactic principle in art; extreme awareness of the principle led to the autonomy of art—and, in the eyes of some, to its immorality. Art for art's sake is very much with us.

In talking about education or about art, however, we would do far better to seek beyond didacticism and autonomy toward a heuristic principle. A novel or a work of history in the humanistic sense does not and cannot directly teach truth or wisdom. It offers us a process, a series of events in our minds, which will tend to bring a responsive individual nearer to his own truth and his own wisdom by recognition or anticipation of his own experience.

The principle of unteachability has two corollaries. We learn, if at all, through correcting error. The process of education consists in setting up the best provisional orderings of life we are capable of and then knocking them down. This binary rhythm has been lost sight of in the United States because of our reluctance to teach a rigorous traditional program in the high schools. In college there is not much for the teacher to break down by advancing further in the field. In fact, the most basic dilemma of the college teacher is that he is forever having to erect by himself the structure he will proceed to demolish. It is too much to ask. The two actions cannot be performed effectively so close together. The excitement and the struggle are lost.

The questions posed in the initial letter of invitation to the conference lead me to two further statements.

First, one of the pervasive and troublesome debates raging in almost every field of teaching today opposes the values of *comprehensive coverage* of a field not to specialization, but to *relevance*. Because of the vast dimensions of what is available to know, and because exhaustiveness bears no relation to method, relevance makes a sensible point of departure. Furthermore, by starting from issues

and dilemmas that most trouble us now, we shall eventually arrive at perspectives far removed from our own and useful to us. Relevance is not a limitation of a field, but our entry into it. This conclusion would be too much of a commonplace to merit mention were the answer to another troublesome question not found here. Does the scholar in the humanities formulate as well as analyze values? The discovery and presentation of relevance are the arena in which the scholar-teacher must perpetually exercise his critical judgment and face the responsibility of formulating values. The bibliography on Dostoevsky is very long; most of us have read something by him and can talk about him; the man wrote great detective stories. But why, finally, is it worth reading those mammoth books? To articulate their relevance is at least a formulation of value and may be a creation of value. Not all scholars reach this point or even try. They take their values for granted and work within them. But the most compelling undertakings in the humanities are those that question the fundamentals and discover that many of them can be set back in place. But not always. It is not a matter of flippancy or game playing. For instance, don't Kafka's novels turn out to be a beautifully composed and elaborate literary hoax? The answer will tell us something about unity of mind and the unteachability of life.

Second, the letter of invitation asked how communication can be carried on between scholars and artists in the same field. The question, of course, is backwards. How can scholars and artists in the same field fail to communicate? They fail, I feel, because the university as an institution tends to keep them apart. And when artists are brought into this community, they are asked to conform to a format entirely unsatisfactory to them, to the scholars, and to the students. The one-night-stand lecture provides little communication for anyone, except the uncertain reward of the dazzlement provoked by the rare charismatic performer. The lecture is one of the more depressing customs systematically financed by universities with fat budgets to spend on big names. The glut is registered on the bulletin boards of campuses all across the country.

The visiting-professor status is equally unsatisfactory. Artists do not usually want to express themselves Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at eleven according to a predesigned sequence, grade inarticulate papers, give exams, and assign grades. The experienced teacher either dies in conforming to this routine or learns a means of

subverting it with imagination. But the artist usually dreads the routine and resigns himself to it.

A different format at least would make it easier for an artist to take part in the essential processes of campus life without having to be that kind of captive mascot called the artist in residence. In the Department of Romance Languages at Texas, we have tried an experiment in this context. A French writer—preferably one who has never visited this country before—is invited for a month in the middle of a semester and “takes over” a graduate course already begun by a regular professor along lines agreed upon. The visitor can do what he pleases—blow the course and its program sky high, have the students write poems, decide that he really wants to talk about something else. If necessary, the course can be brought back to earth after his visit without interfering with his freedom.

When we did this for the first time last spring with Nathalie Sarraute, it became clear that she got as much out of the encounter as the students or the professor. The best moment came when she slowly read aloud a whole page of Flaubert and stopped over a particular sentence to say, “*Mais c’est très beau.*” And one student had the courage to ask just what it was she found beautiful. After a silent reluctance to define her reaction, Mme Sarraute drew out of herself a superb and unrecorded sentence about the delicate irony in *Madame Bovary* which places us both inside Emma’s mind and at the same time at a great enough distance from her to perceive her pathetic romanticism. They were fine encounters, principally because Mme Sarraute was not expected either to lecture or to teach. She talked, and she was also able to “communicate” about literature with my most erudite colleagues whose scorn for the *nouveau roman* is profound and professional.

Experiments and techniques developed in wartime for the teaching of foreign languages have given us new methods for teaching the understanding and speaking of a foreign language. Thousands of students in high schools and colleges spend several hours a week in a controlled state of suspended intelligence learning to manipulate and permute simple oral exercises. For the most part, reading comes late and is performed silently and without much checking for accuracy through translation. In fact, in the linguistically decreed order of things (listening, speaking, reading, writing), reading is the stage that receives least attention. It is almost assumed we will do it naturally.

Unless one is going to become a chronic globe-trotter or use the spoken language continually, however, reading is the most valuable part of this learning process—the total skill that will carry one to the heart of another culture. But to read, one must pronounce correctly. Learning correct pronunciation of a significant literary text—a poem, for example—is a far different process from learning instant responses to sounds one does not fully understand and whose structure one is not expected to analyze. There is no more depressing sight than a class of college freshmen spending the better part of an hour going through pattern drills, in chorus or individually, and then moving on to do more of the same in a language laboratory.

The whole set of goals now established on the lower level of language teaching in the country—and written into the textbooks, budgeted in the laboratories, and made official in curricula—rests on unproven linguistic assumptions that have not been sufficiently examined to see if they contribute to education in humanities where we place language. No one has demonstrated that active oral command of the language is necessary in order to learn to read—nor even that it vastly accelerates or improves the latter process. No one has demonstrated that mechanical habit formation (that is, without intellectual understanding or analysis) is universally the best way of language learning. And no one has demonstrated that after infancy the learning of reading and writing should come a considerable period after the learning of comprehension and speaking. Yet to varying degrees our entire language instruction has swung in this direction.

I sense that we have reached a moment of pause in language instruction, a flood tide or an ebb tide. Laboratory budgets have become astronomical, and new sophisticated equipment continues to appear. Language instruction has reached a point at which it must either declare its independence from literature (as has happened in a few universities where the linguists have taken it over) or return to the humanistic fold.

We have made many gains in the past few years. We have learned just how fast some students can be pushed toward the command of a foreign tongue, and we have learned something about machines. But I would suggest a new goal for language instruction in our schools and colleges. This goal represents far better than the “audio-lingual” method what we could expect from all students; it applies

methods we have learned to teach proper pronunciation; it makes use of worthwhile materials rather than texts written with only pedagogical considerations in mind; and it relates language learning to the rest of a student's program. The single yet complex goal for our language teaching should be to teach the student to read a literary text in the foreign language: to read it for full understanding of its construction, its meaning, and its overtones; to read it *aloud* for proper pronunciation, intonation, and emphasis; and to read with the possibility of translation into English, since the exchange between the two languages is an essential part of what studying a foreign language can contribute to our fund of learning. (I say "literary text" in a broad sense—that is, to include Humboldt and Herzen and Durkheim.) This is not the place to expand on such a suggestion. I make it here in the conviction that only such a revision of our assumptions will bring the hours now devoted to the language requirement back into the domain of the humanities.

We spend a good deal of time in universities and colleges developing and defining interdisciplinary programs. It is difficult to give them focus and at the same time to retain flexibility. I have never in my life heard of a single such program that includes training of the body. Yet we have all read Plato, and possibly St. Ignatius and Stanislavsky and Artaud and some Zen or yoga. The most moving film sequence I have seen in many years came in a documentary on China. In the slanting light of dawn a few mature men stood under the trees and went slowly and attentively through the traditional movements of T'ai Chi Ch'uan. Calisthenics we would call it. But this ritual was beautiful and partook visibly of an intellectual concentration and a spiritual presence that I would call dance. Has such training and performance been banned forever from our education?

Between required physical education and the huge spectacles staged for the public at large, there seems to be a physical desert. Hidden away in a drama department (as dance-drama) or in a physical education department, a college may teach some dance. Modern dance was first recognized as a respectable discipline because a few dancers were enterprising enough to take college degrees and made the whole thing sound intellectual. Ballet has barely found its way into higher education because it requires so long and intensive a period of training. There are good reasons from the point of view of

the dancer to keep dance training in conservatories or separate schools, even though this has not so far developed well as a system in the United States.

I speak rather from the point of view of the student, who should not be expected to forget entirely about the development of his body from the day he starts seriously cultivating his mind. One can hardly introduce touch football or frisbee flipping into the heart of a program in the arts and sciences. But why have we allowed dance to float so far off to the periphery? I have a feeling that there lurks in us all an undivulged prejudice against the cultivation of the healthy body in large groups because we associate it with Hitler's youth programs, fascism, and effeminate men. If this is so, we have done dancing, dancers, and ourselves a great injustice.

The dance is already the interdisciplinary program we are looking for: music, scenario, aesthetics, physiology, anatomy, dynamics of movement, self-discipline, rhythm, history of ideas, language of gesture, and so on to infinity. A college of arts and sciences that establishes a department of dance in its midst will be doing more to extend the meaning of education than can be done through any other single innovation I can think of. Next time you walk across a campus, try to watch not the rising skirts and tightening pants, but the way everyone walks. It is depressing to think that we are educating a nation of cripples.

Past and Present

The title of this issue does not begin to suggest its content. The issue includes the following articles:

Gail W. Lapidus

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Aleksander Smolar

Jews as a Polish Problem

Tu Wei-ming

Iconoclasm, Holistic Vision, and Patient Watchfulness: A Personal Reflection on the Modern Chinese Intellectual Quest

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Gerald Holton

The Roots of Complementarity

EACH AGE is formed by certain characteristic conceptions, those that give it its own unmistakable modernity. The renovation of quantum physics in the mid-1920s brought into public view just such a conception, one that marked a turning point in the road from which our view of the intellectual landscape, in science and in other fields, will forever be qualitatively different from that of earlier periods. It was in September 1927 in Como, Italy, during the International Congress of Physics held in commemoration of the one-hundredth anniversary of Alessandro Volta's death, that Niels Bohr for the first time introduced in a public lecture his formulation of complementarity.¹ Bohr's audience contained most of the leading physicists of the world in this area of work, men such as Max Born, Louis de Broglie, A. H. Compton, Peter Debye, Enrico Fermi, James Franck, Werner Heisenberg, Max von Laue, H. A. Lorentz, Robert Millikan, John von Neumann, Wolfgang Pauli, Max Planck, Arnold Sommerfeld, Otto Stern, Eugene Wigner, and Pieter Zeeman. It was a veritable summit meeting. Only Einstein was conspicuously absent.

COMO, 1927

In the introduction to his lecture, Bohr said he would make use "only of simple considerations, and without going into any details of technical, mathematical character." Indeed, the essay contained only

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few and simple equations. Rather, its avowed purpose was a methodological one that, at least in this initial announcement, did not yet confess its ambitious scope. Bohr stressed only that he wanted to describe "a certain general point of view . . . which I hope will be helpful in order to harmonize the apparently conflicting views taken by different scientists."

He was referring to a profound and persistent difference between the classical description and the quantum description of physical phenomena. To review it, we can give four brief examples of the dichotomy:

1. In classical physics, for example in the description of the motion of planets or billiard balls or other objects which are large enough to be directly visible, the "state of the system" can (at least in principle) be observed, described, defined with arbitrarily small interference of the behavior of the object on the part of the observer, and with arbitrarily small uncertainty. In quantum description, on the other hand, the "state of the system" cannot be observed without significant influence upon the state, as for example when an attempt is made to ascertain the orbit of an electron in an atom, or to determine the direction of propagation of photons. The reason for this situation is simple: the atoms, either in the system to be observed or in the probe that is used in making the observation, are never arbitrarily fine in their response; the energy exchange on which their response depends is not any small quantity we please, but, according to the "quantum postulate" (Planck's fundamental law of quantum physics), can proceed only discontinuously, in discrete steps of finite size.

2. It follows that in cases where the classical description is adequate, a system can be considered closed although it is being observed, since the flow of energy into and out of the system during an observation (for example, of the reflection of light from moving balls) is negligible compared to the energy changes in the system during interaction of the parts of the system. On the other hand, in systems that require quantum description, one cannot neglect the interaction between the "system under observation," sometimes loosely called the "object," and the agency or devices used to make the observations (sometimes loosely called the "subject"). The best-known case of this sort is illustrated by Heisenberg's gamma-ray microscope, in which the progress of an electron is "watched" by

scattering gamma rays from it, with the result that the electron itself is deflected from its original path.

3. In “classical” systems, those for which classical mechanics is adequate, we have both conventional causality chains and ordinary space-time coordination, and both can exist at the same time. In quantum systems, on the other hand, there are no conventional causality chains; if left to itself, a system such as an atom or its radioactive nucleus undergoes changes (such as emission of a photon from the atom or a particle from the nucleus) in an intrinsically probabilistic manner. However, if we subject the “object” to space-time observations, it no longer undergoes its own probabilistic causality sequence. Both these mutually exclusive descriptions of manifestations of the quantum system must be regarded as equally relevant or “true,” although both cannot be exhibited at one and the same time.

4. Finally, we can refer to Bohr’s own illustration in the 1927 essay of “the much discussed question of the nature of light . . . [I]ts propagation in space and time is adequately expressed by the electromagnetic theory. Especially the interference phenomena *in vacuo* and the optical properties of material media are completely governed by the wave theory superposition principle. Nevertheless, the conservation of energy and momentum during the interaction between radiation and matter, as evident in the photoelectric and Compton effect, finds its adequate expression just in the light quantum idea put forward by Einstein.”² Unhappiness with the wave-particle paradox, with being forced to use in different contexts two such antithetical theories of light as the classical wave theory and the quantum (photon) theory was widely felt. Einstein expressed it in April 1924 by writing: “We now have two theories of light, both indispensable, but, it must be admitted, without any logical connection between them, despite twenty years of colossal effort by theoretical physicists.”³

The puzzle raised by the gulf between the classical description and the quantum description was: Could one hope that, as had happened so often before in physics, one of the two antithetical views would somehow be subsumed under or dissolved in the other (somewhat as Galileo and Newton had shown celestial physics to be no different

from terrestrial physics)? Or would one have to settle for two so radically different modes of description of physical phenomena? Would the essential continuity that underlies classical description, where coordinates such as space, time, energy, and momentum can in principle be considered infinitely divisible, remain unyieldingly antithetical to the essential discontinuity and discreteness of atomic processes?

Considering the situation in 1927 in thematic terms, it was by that time clear that physics had inherited contrary themata from the "classical" period (before 1900) and from the quantum period (after 1900). A chief thema of the earlier period was continuity, although it existed side by side with the atomistic view of matter. A chief thema of the more recent period was discontinuity, although it existed side by side with the wave theory of electromagnetic propagation and of the more recent theories associated with de Broglie and Erwin Schrödinger.

In the older physics, also, classical causality was taken for granted, whereas in the new physics the concepts of indeterminacy, statistical description, and probabilistic distribution as inherent aspects of natural description were beginning to be accepted. In the older physics, the possibility of a sharp subject-object separation was not generally challenged; in the new physics it was seen that the subject-object coupling could be cut only in an arbitrary way. In Bohr's sense, a "phenomenon" is the description of that which is to be observed *and* of the apparatus used to obtain the observation.

Bohr's proposal of 1927 was essentially that we should attempt not to reconcile the dichotomies, but rather to realize the complementarity of representations of events in these two quite different languages. The separateness of the accounts is merely a token of the fact that, in the normal language available to us for communicating the results of our experiments, it is possible to express the wholeness of nature only through a complementary mode of descriptions.⁴ The apparently paradoxical, contradictory accounts should not divert our attention from the essential wholeness. Bohr's favorite aphorism was Schiller's "Nur die Fülle führt zur Klarheit." Unlike the situation in earlier periods, clarity does not reside in simplification and reduction to a single, directly comprehensible model, but in the exhaustive overlay of different descriptions that incorporate apparently contradictory notions.

Summarizing his Como talk, Bohr in 1949 stressed that the need to express one's reports ultimately in normal (classical) language dooms any attempt to impose a clear separation between an atomic "object" and the experimental equipment:

The new progress in atomic physics was commented upon from various sides at the International Physical congress held in September 1927, at Como in commemoration of Volta. In a lecture on that occasion, I advocated a point of view conveniently termed "complementarity," suited to embrace the characteristic features of individuality of quantum phenomena, and at the same time to clarify the peculiar aspects of the observational problem in this field of experience. For this purpose, it is decisive to recognize that, *however far the phenomena transcend the scope of classical physical explanation, the account of all evidence must be expressed in classical terms*. The argument is simply that by the word "experiment" we refer to a situation where we can tell others what we have learned and that, therefore, the account of the experimental arrangement and of the results of the observations must be expressed in unambiguous language with suitable application of the terminology of classical physics.

This crucial point, which was to become a main theme of the discussions reported in the following, *implies the impossibility of any sharp separation between the behaviour of atomic objects and the interaction with the measuring instruments which serve to define the conditions under which the phenomena appear*. In fact, the individuality of the typical quantum effects finds its proper expression in the circumstance that any attempt of subdividing the phenomena will demand a change in the experimental arrangement, introducing new possibilities of interaction between objects and measuring instruments which in principle cannot be controlled. Consequently, evidence obtained under different experimental conditions cannot be comprehended within a single picture, but must be regarded as *complementary* in the sense that only the totality of the phenomena exhausts the possible information about the objects.⁵

What Bohr was pointing to in 1927 was the curious realization that in the atomic domain, the only way the observer (including his equipment) can be uninvolved is if he observes nothing at all. As soon as he sets up the observation tools on his workbench, the system he has chosen to put under observation and his measuring instruments for doing the job form one inseparable whole. Therefore, the results depend heavily on the apparatus. In the well-known illustration involving a light beam, if the instrument of measurement contains a

double pinhole through which the light passes, the result of observation will indicate that a wave phenomenon is involved; but if the "same" light beam is used when the measuring instrument contains a collection of recoiling scatterers, then the observation results will indicate that a stream of particles is involved. (Moreover, precisely the same two kinds of observations are obtained when, instead of the beam of light, one uses a beam of "particles" such as atoms or electrons or other subatomic particles.) One cannot construct an experiment which simultaneously exhibits the wave and the particle aspects of atomic matter. A particular experiment will always show only one view or representation of objects at the atomic level.

The study of nature is a study of artifacts that appear during an engagement between the scientist and the world in which he finds himself. And these artifacts themselves are seen through the lens of theory. Thus, different experimental conditions give different views of "nature." To call light either a wave phenomenon or a particle phenomenon is impossible; in either case, too much is left out. To call light *both* a wave phenomenon and a particle phenomenon is to oversimplify matters. Our knowledge of light is contained in a number of statements that are seemingly contradictory, made on the basis of a variety of experiments under different conditions, and interpreted in the light of a complex of theories. When you ask, "What is light?" the answer is: the observer, his various pieces and types of equipment, his experiments, his theories and models of interpretation, *and* whatever it may be that fills an otherwise empty room when the lightbulb is allowed to keep on burning. All this, together, is light.

No objections seem to have been raised against Niels Bohr's paper at the Como meeting. On the other hand, at this first hearing the importance of the new point of view was not immediately appreciated. Apparently, a typical comment overheard after Bohr's lecture was that it "will not induce any of us to change his own opinion about quantum mechanics."⁶ A distinguished group of physicists, although a minority in the field, remained unconvinced by and indeed hostile to the complementarity point of view. Foremost among them was Einstein, who heard the first extensive exposition a month after the Como meeting, in October 1927, at the Solvay Congress in Brussels. Einstein had disliked even the earlier Göttingen-Copenhagen

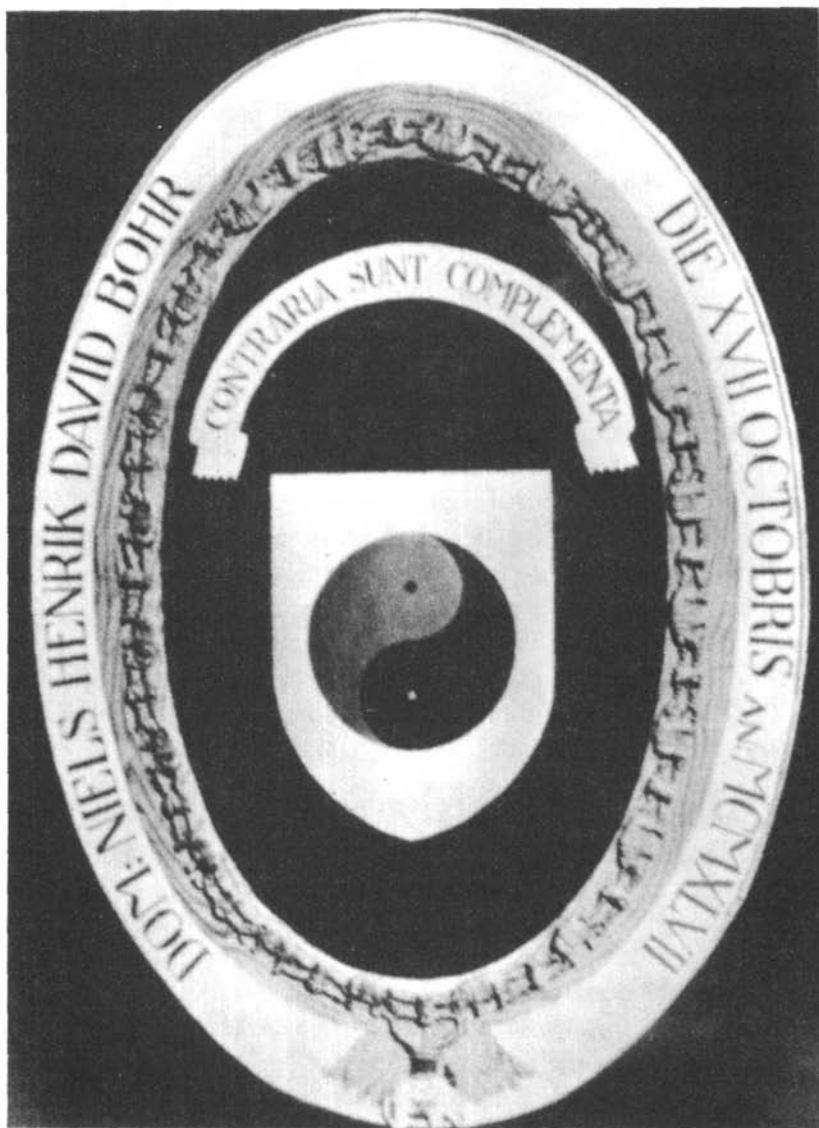
interpretations of atomic physics that were based on the themata of discontinuity and nonclassical causality. He had written to Paul Ehrenfest (August 28, 1926), "I stand before quantum mechanics with admiration and suspicion," and to Bohr (December 4, 1926) Einstein had said, "Quantum mechanics demands serious attention. But an inner voice tells me that this is not the true Jacob. The theory accomplishes a lot, but it does not bring us closer to the secrets of the Old One. In any case, I am convinced that He does not play dice."⁷

Almost a quarter of a century later Einstein was still in opposition, and added two objections to the complementarity principle: "to me it must seem a mistake to permit theoretical description to be directly dependent upon acts of empirical assertions, as it seems to be intended (for example) in Bohr's principle of complementarity, the sharp formulation of which, moreover, I have been unable to achieve despite much effort which I have expended on it."⁸

Bohr himself was aware from the beginning that the complementarity point of view was a program rather than a finished work; that is, it had to be extended and deepened by much subsequent work. It was to him "a most valuable incentive . . . to reexamine the various aspects of the situation as regards the description of atomic phenomena" and "a welcome stimulus to verify still further the role played by the measuring instruments."⁹ However, as we shall see, over the years Bohr came to regard the complementarity principle as more and more important, extending far beyond the original context in which it had been announced. For his later, deep commitment to the conception, and for his awareness of the antiquity of some of its roots, we need cite here only an anecdotal piece of evidence. When Bohr was awarded the Danish Order of the Elephant in 1947, he had to supervise the design of a coat of arms for placement in the church of the Frederiksborg Castle at Hillerød. The device (see the figure on page 158) presents the idea of complementarity: above the central insignia, the legend says "*Contraria sunt complementa*," and at the center Bohr placed the symbol for Yin and Yang.

LUX VERSUS LUMEN

How did Bohr's complementarity point of view—so far from the older scientific tradition of strict separation between the observer and the observed—come to be developed? Finding the various roots of



Coat of arms chosen by Niels Bohr when he was awarded the Danish Order of the Elephant, 1947. From S. Rozental, ed., *Niels Bohr: His Life and Work as Seen by His Friends and Colleagues* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1967), facing p. 305.

and the likely preparatory conditions for this transforming conception—those in physical theory and those in philosophical tradition—appears to me to be an interesting problem that is far from its unambiguous solution. However, there are already some useful results of the search, particularly insofar as they may have relevance for a better understanding of the mutual interaction of scientific and humanistic traditions.

The first direction to look is the development of the early ideas concerning the nature of light. That a modern thema was already inherent in the formulations that began in antiquity should not surprise us; we know from other studies that despite all change and progress of science, the underlying, important themata are relatively few. In one guise or another they have been the mainstay of the imagination.

One of the favorite ancient ideas concerning the nature of light, originating in the Pythagorean school, postulated that rays are emitted by the eye to explore the world. Euclid spoke of the eye as if it were sending out visual rays whose ends probed the object, somewhat like the stick of a blind man tapping around himself. A somewhat more refined conception of this general sort is still found in Ptolemy in the second century A.D. in the *Almagest*, and so was transmitted to a later period.

There is in these emission theories of light clearly an intimate interaction through contact between the observer and the observed. This is also true for the emanation tradition in another, less materialistic form.¹⁰ Here, objects are thought to impress themselves upon our sight owing to a contact force similar to touch—action at a distance being ruled out in classical physics—and this touch reaches our souls by the action of the *eidola*, or images or shadows which the emitting bodies send out. Plato held that as long as the eye is open, it emits an inner light. For the eye to perceive, however, there must be outside the eye a “related other light,” that of the sun or some other source that allows rays to come from the objects. Once more, a coupling between the outer and the inner world is clearly attempted.

There were immense problems with emission theories. How, for example, can the eye pupil, only a few millimeters wide, admit the image that was emitted by a huge mountain? Nevertheless, the emanation theory was the takeoff point for the optics developed in the seventeenth century. Here we find the modern idea that there is an

infinite number of rays leaving from every point of an illuminated object in all directions. But the observer now stands offstage, and he may or may not be the recipient of some of these ray bundles. The latter are no longer the *lux* of the ancients—*lux* being the word for light when it is regarded as a subjective phenomenon—but rather the *lumen*, a kind of stream of light “objects.”

The modern period started effectively with Kepler, who in his writing on Witelo in 1604 and later in the *Dioptrics* of 1611 described how light is refracted by a sphere, for example in a spherical bottle filled with water; he applied his findings to the pupil of the eye. Here was the basic new idea in the optics of vision: the eyeball, and the lens in front of it, focus the ray bundles that come through the pupil, and at the focus the sensorium is stimulated in some way—which is simply not discussed as part of optics. In the *Dioptrics* Kepler showed for the first time how lenses really work. Significantly, most images that can be constructed diagrammatically by ray optics can, in fact, not be seen at all by an eye placed at the instrument. Gone are the *eidola* and the *species*, the “recognition” of soul by soul in Neoplatonist discussion of optics—but gone also is the close coupling of the observer and the observed. The *lumen* had won over the *lux*.

We see how the science of optics became “modern”: by an act of breaking the bonding that was self-evident for the ancients, by disengaging the conceptions of what goes on “out there, objectively speaking” on the one hand, and what the eye does with light on the other hand. At some point someone had to do what Kepler, in preparing for Newton, finally did, namely to get interested in bundles of light rays coming together on a screen outside an eye—or, what is for the physics of light significantly exactly the same thing, on the retina or screen in back of the eye—and to stop thinking about the sense impressions produced at such a focus at the same time. As Müller’s influential *Lehrbuch der Physik* said in 1926, just one year before Bohr’s formulation of the idea of complementarity, the first task of physical optics “is the sharp separation between the objective ray of light and the sensory impression of light. The subject of discussion of physical optics is the ray of light, whereas the inner processes between eye and brain”—says the *Lehrbuch*, dismissing the matter—“are in the domain of physiology, and perhaps also psychology.”

We see here an attempt at precisely the same separation of primary and secondary qualities, between the numerical and affective aspects of nature, that, as it had turned out three centuries before, was the key with which Galileo and others at that time managed to go from the mechanics of antiquity to modern mechanics. We recall that it was Galileo who did for particles, such as falling stones, what Kepler did for light—namely, to remove the language of volition and teleology, and to fortify the notion of “impersonal,” causal laws of motion. The Newtonian science of light has no primary place for the observer and his sense impression. In this manner, the important, basic properties of light could be discovered: the finite propagation speed, the existence of light rays outside the range to which the eye is sensitive, the analogy between light rays and other radiation such as X-rays, and so forth.

The decoupling between *lux* and *lumen*, between subject and object, observer and the observed, and with it the destruction of the earlier, holistic physics, was a painful and lengthy process. The reason why it was ultimately victorious is the reason why the same process in all other parts of science worked: once the separation was made, there ensued a dazzling enrichment of our intellectual and material world. By 1927, a reader of physics texts was bound to feel that the modern theory of light, from electromagnetic theory to the design of optical instruments, devoted its attention entirely to *lumen*, and was a field just as deanthropomorphized as all other parts of the developed physical sciences.

But the seed of a new view of light was present, carried in the early historic development which we have sketched, in the prescientific, commonsense notions that everyone begins with—and in the operational meaning of some of the main concepts of optics. Thus we turn to a second main line of ideas leading to the complementarity point of view.

OPERATIONAL MEANINGS

One of the oldest and most elementary building blocks of optics is: light travels in any homogeneous medium in straight lines. But let us consider for a moment why we believe that this statement is true.

We can check it most directly in an experimental way by inserting a screen or scatterer, such as chalk dust, in different parts of the same

beam. If we consider this closely, we notice that such a method destroys the light beam that we wanted to examine. The insertion of the apparatus interferes with the phenomenon.

This situation is typical on the atomic scale. There are no comparable problems when one wishes to check, say, Newton's first law of motion for ordinary physical objects, for example by watching or photographing a ball rolling on a flat table. We can verify that a material object in a force-free medium will travel in straight lines without drastically interrupting the object's path. The small effects of the apparatus can be removed by calculation. The fact that the observer and the "object" must share between them at least one indivisible quantum is here negligible, that is, can be made an arbitrarily small part of the phenomenon. From past observations we can therefore extrapolate with certainty the paths the object will take in the future. Space-time descriptions and classical causality apply without difficulty. Not so for beams of light and of other particles on the atomic scale. The more certainly we have ascertained their past, the less certainly we can follow their subsequent progress; the effect of the perturbing interaction with the apparatus cannot be taken out by calculation but is intrinsically probabilistic. In fact, owing to the uncertainty principle, it is not even possible to define precisely the initial state of the system in the sense required by the classical view of causality.

If we do not wish to intercept the whole beam, we can try to discover whether a beam goes in a straight line by another method: by placing a number of slits at some distance from one another, but all along the same axis, then checking if light penetrates this whole set of collimators. But there are now two problems. First, how do we know whether the slits are indeed arranged in a straight line? We might check it with a straightedge—but we know the straightedge is straight because we can sight directly along it and see no curves or protrusions. Clearly, this process of sighting, or anything equally effective, relies on using a light beam to sight along the ruler. And that, of course, is circular reasoning, assuming, in setting up the instrument, what the experiment is designed to prove.

The paradox is not inescapable; there are other, although more cumbersome, methods for lining up the slits without assuming anything about light. But again, we run into trouble. The more closely we wish to define the line along which the beam is to travel,

and consequently the narrower we make the slit, the more we find that the beam's energy is spread out into the "shadow," turning, as it were, a corner on going through the slit. This is the phenomenon of diffraction. It is exceedingly easy to demonstrate with the crudest equipment, even just by letting light from a candle pass through the narrow space between two fingers held closely to the eye.

We are dealing here with an instrumental coupling between observer (equipment) and the entity to be observed. As soon as we try to give an operational meaning to the phrase "light travels in any homogeneous medium in straight lines," we see what a poor statement it is.

As a result, a physicist is likely to prefer another statement, more general but which can be reduced in the limit to the one above. It is Fermat's Principle of Least Time, derived from a statement that dates from about 1650. Between any two points, light will go along that path in which the time spent in transit is less than the time that would be spent in any other path. This view explains why a light beam appears to go in a straight line in a homogeneous medium and also how a beam is reflected or refracted at the interfaces of two media. But the statement harbors the curious idea that light is "exploring" to find the quickest path, as if light were scouting around in the apparatus. We get here a hint of instrumental coupling of the most intimate sort. The suspicion arises that the properties we assign to light are to some degree the properties of the boxes through which light has to find its way.

This becomes quite obvious and unmistakable when we turn to another well-known experiment. When light is sent through a double slit, an interference pattern characteristic of the geometry of the arrangement is obtained on a screen. If one of the two slits is blocked off, a rather different pattern of interference results. All this can be easily understood with elementary constrictions from the classical theory of light. However, if a very weak beam of light is used with the double-slit experiment, so that at any given time it is exceedingly unlikely that more than a single photon travels through the apparatus, a remarkable thing will be observed: even though one cannot help using classical language and thinking that a single photon will have to go through either one or the other of the two slits at a given time, it will be found that as long as both slits are kept open, the interference pattern accumulating in due course on a photographic

plate placed at the screen has exactly the same characteristics as that for the earlier double-slit experiment, when the beam was so strong that at any given moment some photons were passing through one of the slits and some photons were passing through the other. Equally remarkable, if one now closes one of the slits toward which the very weak beam of photons is being sent, the interference pattern accumulated over a period changes to the pattern characteristic of a strong light beam passing through a single slit. The fact that for a weak light beam the interference pattern depends on the number of slits available—even though there is no evident way in which the single photon can “know” if the other slit is open—is an indication that the experimental observations of light yield characteristics of the box and its slits as much as of light itself. In short, the experiments are made on the entity light + box. Here, then, in the operational examination of the laws of light propagation is a second path leading to the complementarity idea.

FROM CORRESPONDENCE TO COMPLEMENTARITY

Yet another primary influence on Bohr was, of course, the achievement and failures of physics in his own work from about 1912 to about 1925. Bohr’s model of the hydrogen atom of 1912–1913 is now usually remembered best for the magnificent accomplishment of predicting the frequencies of the emission spectrum. To do this, Bohr essentially tried to reconcile the two apparently antithetical notions about light, both of which had had their successes—the electromagnetic theory of Maxwell, according to which light propagates as a wavelike disturbance characterized by continuity, and, on the other hand, Einstein’s theory that light energy is characterized by discreteness and discontinuity. As Einstein had put it in his 1905 paper presenting a “heuristic” point of view concerning the interaction of light and matter, “The energy in the light propagated in rays from a point is not smeared out continuously over larger and larger volumes, but rather consists of a finite number of energy quanta localized at space points, which move without breaking up, and which can be absorbed or emitted only as wholes.”

By 1912 the indisputable evidence for Einstein’s outrageous notion was not yet at hand, but some experiments on the photoelectric effect, including those with X-rays, began to make it plausible.¹¹

Indeed, it was not until Millikan's experiment, published in 1916, and A. H. Compton's experiment of 1922 that the quantum theory of light was seen everywhere to be unavoidable.

It is therefore, in retrospect, even more remarkable how courageous Niels Bohr's work of 1912–1913 was. Let us recall his model of the hydrogen atom in its initial form, even though it was soon made more accurate, though more complex. Bohr's hydrogen atom had the nucleus at the center (where Ernest Rutherford, in whose Manchester laboratory Bohr was a guest, had just then discovered it to be) and the electron orbiting at some fixed distance around the nucleus. When the sample is heated or the atoms are otherwise excited by being given extra energy, the electron of the excited atom will not be in the normal, innermost orbit, or ground state, but will be traveling in a more distant orbit. At some point the electron will jump from the outer orbit to one of the allowed inner orbits and, in so doing, will give up the energy difference between these orbits, or stationary states, in the form of a photon of energy $h\nu$. This corresponds to the emission of light at the observed frequency ν or the corresponding wave length $\lambda = c/\nu$ (where c is the speed of light). The various observed frequencies emitted from an excited sample of hydrogen atoms were therefore interpreted to be a stream of photons, each photon having the energy corresponding to the allowed transition between stationary states.

The success of the model in explaining all known spectrum lines of hydrogen, in predicting other series that were also found, and in giving a solid foothold on the explanation of chemical properties, could not hide the realization, fully apparent to Niels Bohr himself, that the model carried with it a number of grave problems. First of all, it used simultaneously two separate notions which were clearly conflicting: the classical notion of an identifiable electron moving in an identifiable orbit like a miniature planetary system, and the quantum notion that such an electron is in a stationary state rather than continually giving up energy while orbiting (as it should do on the basis of Maxwell's theory, amply tested for charges circulating in structures of large size). Bohr's postulate that the electron would not lose energy by radiation while in an orbit, but only on transition from one orbit to the other, was necessary to "save" the atom from gradually collapsing with the emission of a spectrum line of continuously changing frequency. Also, contrary to all previous ideas, the

frequency of the emitted photon was not equal to the frequency of the model's orbiting electron, either in its initial or in its final stationary state.

Looking back later on the situation of about 1912, Merle A. Tuve noted that the Bohr atom was "quite irrational and absurd from the viewpoint of classical Newtonian mechanics and Maxwellian electrodynamics. . . . Various mathematical formalisms were devised which simply 'described' atomic states and transitions, but the same arbitrary avoidance of detailed processes, for example, descriptions of the actual *process* of transition, were inherent in all these formulations."¹²

Niels Bohr himself took pains to stress these conflicts from the beginning. In fact, the explanation of the spectral lines, which were the most widely hailed achievement, more or less constituted an afterthought in his own work. His interest was precisely to examine the area of conflict between the conceptions of ordinary electrodynamics and classical mechanics on the one hand and quantum physics on the other. As Jammer pointed out, "Not only did Bohr fully recognize the profound chasm in the conceptual scheme of his theory, but he was convinced that progress in quantum theory could not be obtained unless the antithesis between quantum-theoretic and classical conceptions was brought to the forefront of theoretical analysis. He therefore attempted to trace the roots of this antithesis as deeply as he could. It was in this search for fundamentals that he introduced the revolutionary conception of 'stationary' states, 'indicating thereby that they form some kind of waiting places between which occurs the emission of the energy corresponding to the various spectral lines,' [as Bohr put it in an address of December 20, 1913, to the Physical Society in Copenhagen¹³]." At the end of his address, Bohr said, "I hope I have expressed myself sufficiently clearly so that you appreciate the extent to which these considerations conflict with the admirably coherent group of conceptions which have been rightly termed the classical theory of electrodynamics. On the other hand, by emphasizing this conflict, I have tried to convey to you the impression that it may also be possible in the course of time to discover a certain coherence in the new ideas."

This methodological strategy of *emphasizing conceptual conflict as a necessary preparation for its resolution* culminated, fourteen years later, in the announcement of the complementarity principle. In the

meantime, Bohr formulated a proposal that turned out to be a moderately successful halfway house toward the reconciliation between classical and quantum mechanics, a conception which, from about 1918 on, became known as the correspondence principle.

In essence, Bohr still hoped for the resolution between opposites by attending to an area where they overlap, namely the extreme cases where quantum theory and classical mechanics yield to each other. For example, for very large orbits of the hydrogen atom's electron, the neighboring allowed stationary states in Bohr's model come to be very close together. It is easily shown that a transition between such orbits, on the basis of quantum notions, yields a radiation of just the same frequency expected on classical grounds for a charged particle orbiting as part of a current in a circular antenna—and, moreover, the frequency of radiation would be equal to the frequency of revolution in the orbit. Thus for sufficiently large "atoms," and conversely for sufficiently small "circuits" scaled down from the normal size of ordinary electric experiments, a coincidence, or correspondence, of predictions is obtained from the two theories.

In this manner, classical physics becomes the limiting case of the more complex quantum physics: our more ordinary, large-scale experiments fail to show their inherently quantal character only because the transitions involved are between states characterized by high quantum numbers. In this situation the quantum of action relative to the energies involved in the system is effectively zero rather than having a finite value, and owing to the large number of events, the discreteness of individual events is dissolved in an experienced continuum.

The correspondence principle came to be developed in the hands of Bohr and his collaborators into a sophisticated tool. The basic hope behind it was explained by Bohr in a letter to A. A. Michelson on February 7, 1924:

It may perhaps interest you to hear that it appears to be possible for a believer in the essential reality of the quantum theory to take a view which may harmonize with the essential reality of the wave-theory conception even more closely than the views I expressed during our conversation. In fact on the basis of the correspondence principle it seems possible to connect the discontinuous processes occurring in atoms with the continuous character of the radiation field in a somewhat more adequate way than hitherto

perceived. . . . I hope soon to send you a paper about these problems written in cooperation with Drs. Kramer and Slater.¹⁴

But shortly after the publication in 1924 of the paper by Bohr, Kramer, and Slater,¹⁵ experiments were initiated by W. Bothe and H. Geiger and by A. H. Compton and A. W. Simon—with unambiguously disconfirming results. The correspondence principle, it appeared now clearly, had been a useful patch over the fissure, but it was not a profound solution.

Even before that discovery, major problems known to be inherent in the Bohr atom included the following: the fact that the antithetical notions of the wave (implied in the frequency or wavelength of light emitted) and of the particle (implied in the then current idea of the electron) were by no means resolved, but on the contrary persisted unchanged in the model of the atom; so did the conflict between the antithetical notions of classical causality on the one hand (as in the presumed motion of the electrons in their orbits) and of probabilistic features on the other (as for the transitions between allowed orbits); and even the notion of the “identity” of the atom had to be revised, for it was no longer even in principle observable and explorable as a separate entity without interfering with its state. Each different type of experiment produces its own change of state, so that different experiments produce different “identities.”

Such questions remained at the center of discussion among the most concerned physicists. Schrödinger and de Broglie, for example, hoped to deal with the glaring contrast between the themata of continuity and discontinuity by providing a wave-mechanical explanation for phenomena that previously had been thought to demand a language of quantization. As Schrödinger wrote in his first paper on the subject,¹⁶ “It is hardly necessary to point out how much more gratifying it would be to conceive a quantum transition as an energy change from one vibrational mode to another than to regard it as a jumping of electrons. The variation of vibrational modes may be treated as a process continuous in space and time and enduring as long as the emission process persists.” Thus, space-time description and classical causality would be preserved.

The reception accorded to Schrödinger’s beautiful papers was interesting. Heisenberg had obtained essentially the same results in a quite different way through his matrix mechanics; as Jammer notes,

“it was an *algebraic* approach which, proceeding from the observed discreteness of spectral lines, emphasized the element of *discontinuity*; in spite of its renunciation of classical description in space and time it was ultimately the theory whose basic conception was the *corpuscle*. Schrödinger’s, in contrast, was based on the familiar apparatus of differential equations, akin to the classical mechanics of fluids and suggestive of an easily visualizable representation; it was an *analytical* approach which, proceeding from a generalization of the classical laws of motion, stressed the element of *continuity*.”¹⁷ “Those who in their yearning for continuity hated to renounce the classical maxim *natura non facit saltus* acclaimed Schrödinger as the herald of a new dawn. In fact, within a few brief months, Schrödinger’s theory ‘captivated the world of physics’ because it seemed to promise ‘a fulfillment of that long-baffled and insuppressible desire’ [in the words of K. K. Darrow, *The Bell System Technical Journal* 6 (1927)]. . . . Planck reportedly declared ‘I am reading it as a child reads a puzzle,’ and Sommerfeld was exultant.”¹⁸ So, of course, was Einstein, who as early as 1920 had written to Born, “that one has to solve the quanta by giving up the continuum, I do not believe.”

We are, of course, dealing here with the kind of intellectual commitment, or “insuppressible desire,” that characterizes a true thematic attachment. Rarely has there been a more obvious fight between different themata vying for allegiance, or a conflict between the aesthetic criteria of scientific choice in the face of the same set of experimental data. And nothing is more revealing of the true and passionate motivation of scientists than their responses to each others’ antithetical constructs. In a letter to Pauli, Heisenberg wrote: “The more I ponder about the physical part of Schrödinger’s theory, the more disgusting [*desto abscheulicher*] it appears to me.” Schrödinger, on his side, freely published his response to Heisenberg’s theory: “I was discouraged [*abgeschreckt*] if not repelled [*abgestossen*].”¹⁹

Different aspects of thematic analysis and thematic conflict were the subject of previous articles.²⁰ In these studies I pointed out a number of other theme-antitheme couples, which may be symbolized by $(\theta, \bar{\theta})$. What Bohr had done in 1927, shortly after the Heisenberg-Schrödinger debates, was to develop a point of view which would allow him to accept both members of the $(\theta, \bar{\theta})$ couple as valid

pictures of nature, accepting the continuity-discontinuity (or wave-particle) duality as an irreducible fact, instead of attempting to dissolve one member of the pair in the other as he had essentially tried to do in the development of the correspondence-principle point of view. Secondly, Bohr saw that the $(\theta, \bar{\theta})$ couple involving discrete atomism on the one hand and continuity on the other is related to other $(\theta, \bar{\theta})$ dichotomies that had obstinately refused to yield to bridging or mutual absorption (for example, the subject-object separation versus subject-object coupling; classical causality versus probabilistic causality). The consequence Bohr drew from these recognitions was of a kind rare in the history of thought: he introduced explicitly a new thema, or at least identified a thema that had not yet been consciously a part of contemporary physics. Specifically, Bohr asked that physicists accept both θ and $\bar{\theta}$ —though both would not be found in the same plane of focus at any given time. Nor are θ and $\bar{\theta}$ to be transformed into some new entity. Rather, they both exist in the form *either θ or $\bar{\theta}$* , the choice depending on the theoretical or experimental question which you may decide to ask. We see at once why all parties concerned, both those identified with θ and those identified with $\bar{\theta}$, would not easily accept a new theme which saw a basic truth in the existence of a paradox that the others were trying to remove.

POUL MARTIN MØLLER AND WILLIAM JAMES

Another root of the complementarity conception can be discerned in Niels Bohr's work when we carefully read and reread his own statements of the complementarity point of view. For it is at first curious and then undeniably significant that from the very beginning in 1927, Niels Bohr cited experiences of daily life to make apparent the difficulty of distinguishing between object and subject, and, as Oskar Klein wrote in a retrospective essay, in order "to facilitate understanding of the new situation in physics, where his view appeared too radical or mysterious even to many physicists."²¹ In this connection, according to Klein, Bohr chose a particularly simple and vivid example: the use one may make of a stick when trying to find one's way in a dark room. The man, the stick, and the room form one entity. The dividing line between subject and object is not fixed. For example, the dividing line is at the end of the stick when the

stick is grasped firmly. But when it is loosely held, the stick appears to be an object being explored by the hand. It is a striking reminder of the situation described in the classical emanation theory of light in which we first noted the problem of coupling between observer and observed.

On studying Bohr's writings one realizes by and by that his uses of apparently "extraneous" examples or analogies of this sort are more than mere pedagogic devices. In his September 1927 talk, the final sentence was "I hope, however, that the idea of complementarity is suited to characterize the situation, which bears a deep-going analogy to the general difficulty in the formation of human ideas, inherent in the distinction between subject and object." Similar and increasingly more confident remarks continued to characterize Bohr's later discussions of complementarity. Thus in his essay "Quantum Physics and Philosophy" (1958), the lead essay in the second collection of Bohr's essays under the title *Essays 1958–1962 on Atomic Physics and Human Knowledge*,²² Bohr concluded, "It is significant that . . . in other fields of knowledge, we are confronted with situations reminding us of the situation in quantum physics. Thus, the integrity of living organisms, and the characteristics of conscious individuals, and human cultures, present features of wholeness, the account of which implies a typical complementarity mode of description *We are not dealing with more or less vague analogies, but with clear examples of logical relations which, in different contexts, are met with in wider fields.*" It will be important for our analysis to try to discern clearly what Bohr means in such passages.

Some illumination is provided by a story which Niels Bohr loved to tell in order to illustrate and make more understandable the complementarity point of view. Léon Rosenfeld, a long-term associate of Niels Bohr, who has also been concerned with the origins of complementarity, told how seriously Bohr took his task of repeatedly telling the story. "Everyone of those who came into closer contact with Bohr at the Institute, as soon as he showed himself sufficiently proficient in the Danish language, was acquainted with the little book: it was part of his initiation."²³

The "little book" which Bohr used was a work of the nineteenth-century poet and philosopher, Poul Martin Møller. In that light story *The Adventures of a Danish Student*, Bohr found what he called a "vivid and suggestive account of the interplay between the various

aspects of our position." A student is trying to explain why he cannot use the opportunity for finding a practical job, and reports the difficulties he is experiencing with his own thought process:

My endless enquiries make it impossible for me to achieve anything. Furthermore, I get to think about my own thoughts of the situation in which I find myself. I even think that I think of it, and divide myself into an infinite retrogressive sequence of "I's" who consider each other. I do not know at which "I" to stop as the actual one, and in the moment I stop at one, there is indeed again an "I" which stops at it. I become confused and feel a dizziness, as if I were looking down into a bottomless abyss, and my ponderings result finally in a terrible headache.

Further, the student remarks:

The mind cannot proceed without moving along a certain line; but before following this line, it must already have thought it. Therefore one has already thought every thought before one thinks it. Thus every thought, which seems the work of a minute, presupposes an eternity. This could almost drive me to madness. How could then any thought arise, since it must have existed before it is produced? . . . The insight into the impossibility of thinking contains itself an impossibility, the recognition of which again implies an inexplicable contradiction.²⁴

Bohr used the situation in the story not as a distant, vague analogy; rather, it is one of those cases which, "in different contexts, are met with in wider fields." Moreover, the story seems appropriate for two other reasons. Bohr reports that conditions of analysis and synthesis of psychological experiences "have always been an important problem in philosophy. It is evident that words like thoughts and sentiments, referring to mutually exclusive experiences, have been used in a typical complementary manner since the very origin of language."²⁵ Also, the humane setting of the Danish story, and the fact that it renders a situation in words rather than scientific symbols, should not mislead us into thinking that it is thereby qualitatively different from the information supplied in scientific discourse. On the contrary: Bohr said, in defending the complementarity principle, "The aim of our argumentation is to emphasize that all experience, whether in science, philosophy, or art, which may be helpful to mankind, must be capable of being communicated by human means of expression, and it is on this basis that we shall approach the

question of unity of knowledge.”²⁶ We shall come back to this important statement presently.

Now, one must confess that it is on first encounter curious, and at least for a professional physicist perhaps a little shocking, to find that the father of the complementarity principle, in these passages and others, should frequently have gone so far afield, by the standards of the scientific profession, in illustrating and extending what he took to be the full power of the complementarity point of view. In looking for the roots of the complementarity principle, we might grant more readily the three avenues shown so far, namely through the history of the concept of light, the operational definition of light behavior, and through Bohr’s own work in physics. But in pursuing this new avenue, we seem to be leaving science entirely.

I imagine that many of Bohr’s students and associates listened to his remarks with polite tolerance, perhaps agreeing that there might be a certain pedagogic benefit, but not a key to the “unity of knowledge.” To the typical scientist, the student in Møller’s story who becomes dizzy when he tries to think *about* his own thoughts, because precise “thought” and “thought about thought” are complementary with respect to each other and so mutually exclusive at the same time, would seem somehow to have a problem different from that of the experimenter who cannot simultaneously show both the wave characteristics and the particle characteristics of a light beam. Similarly the intrusion of the student as introspective observer upon his own thought processes seems to have after all only a thin connection with the intrusion of the macroscopic laboratory upon the submicroscopic quantum events being studied.

It was therefore surprising and revealing when it was found recently, almost by accident, that one of the roots of the modern complementarity point of view in Niels Bohr’s own experience was probably just this wider, more humanistic context shown in the previous quotations. The discovery I speak of came about in a dramatic way. A few years ago, the American Physical Society and the American Philosophical Society engaged in a joint project to assemble the sources for the scholarly study of the history of quantum mechanics. This project, under the general directorship of Thomas S. Kuhn, spanned a number of years, and one of its functions was to

obtain interviews with major figures on the origins of their contributions to quantum physics. An appointment for a number of interviews was granted by Niels Bohr, and the fifth interview was conducted on November 17, 1962, by Kuhn and Aage Petersen. In the course of the interview, Petersen, who was Niels Bohr's long-time assistant, raised the question of the relevance of the study of philosophy in Bohr's early thoughts. The following interchange occurred, according to the transcript:

AaP: How did you look upon the history of philosophy? What kind of contributions did you think people like Spinoza, Hume, and Kant had made?

NB: That is difficult to answer, but I felt that these various questions were treated in an irrelevant manner [in my studies].

AaP: Also Berkeley?

NB: No, I knew what views Berkeley had. I had seen a little in Høffding's writings, but it was not what one wanted.

TSK: Did you read the works of any of these philosophers?

NB: I read some, but that was an interest by [and here Bohr suddenly stopped and exclaimed]—oh, the whole thing is coming [back to me]! I was a close friend of Rubin [a fellow student, later psychologist], and, therefore, I read actually the work of William James. William James is really wonderful in the way he makes it clear—I think I read the book, or a paragraph, called . . . No, what is that called? It is called "The Stream of Thoughts," where he in a most clear manner shows that it is quite impossible to analyze things in terms of—I don't know what to call it, not atoms. I mean simply, if you have some things . . . they are so connected that if you try to separate them from each other, it just has nothing to do with the actual situation. I think that we shall really go into these things, and I know something about William James. That is coming first up now. And that was because I spoke to people about other things, and then Rubin advised me to read something of William James, and I thought he was most wonderful.

TSK: When was this that you read William James?

NB: That may be a little later, I don't know. I got so much to do, and it may be at the time I was working with surface tension [1905], or it may be just a little later. I don't know.

TSK: But it would be before Manchester [1912]?

NB: Oh yes, it was many years before.²⁷

Niels Bohr clearly was interested in pursuing this further—"we shall really go into these things." But alas, the next day Bohr suddenly died.

There are enough leads to permit plausible speculations on this subject. K. T. Meyer-Abich reports in his interesting book, *Korrespondenz, Individualität und Komplementarität* (Wiesbaden, 1965) that among German scientists it was remembered that Bohr used to cite William James and only a few other Western philosophers. Moreover, Niels Bohr himself, in an article in 1929²⁸ makes lengthy excursions into psychology in order to use analogies that, in Meyer-Abich's opinion, could well refer directly to William James's chapter on the "stream of thought" in James's book, *The Principles of Psychology* (1890). On the other hand, doubts have been raised about the timing. Rosenfeld²⁹ has expressed his strong belief that the work of William James was not known to Niels Bohr until about 1932. He recalls that in or about 1932, Bohr showed Rosenfeld a copy of James's *Principles of Psychology*. Rosenfeld believes that a few days earlier Bohr had had a conversation with Rubin, the psychologist and Bohr's former fellow student. Rubin may have sent the book to Bohr after their conversation. Bohr showed excited interest in the book, and especially pointed out to Rosenfeld the passages on the "stream of consciousness." During the next few days, Bohr shared the same excitement with several visitors, and Rosenfeld retained the definite impression that this was Bohr's first acquaintance with William James's work. In Rosenfeld's opinion, more relevant than speculation concerning an early influence of James was a remark made by Bohr: after discussing his "early philosophical meditations and his pioneering work of 1912–1913, he told me [Rosenfeld] in an unusually solemn tone of voice, 'and you must not forget that I was quite alone in working out these ideas, and had no help from anybody.'"³⁰

In view of remarkable analogies or similarities between the ideas of James and of Bohr, to be shown below, one can choose either to believe, with Meyer-Abich and Jammer, that Bohr had read James early enough to be directly influenced or to believe, with Rosenfeld,

that Bohr had independently arrived at the analogous thoughts (perhaps brought to them by other forces such as those we have already cited or additional ones such as contemplation of the concepts of multiform function and Riemann surfaces).³¹ In some ways the second alternative is the more interesting though difficult one, for it hints that here may be a place to attack the haunting old question why and by what mechanisms the same themata attain prominence in different fields in nearly the same periods. Still, no matter which view one chooses to take at this time, reading William James's chapter on the "stream of thought" in the light of Bohr's remark in the interview of November 1962 comes as a surprise to a physicist familiar with Bohr's contributions to atomic physics.³²

James first insists that thought can exist only in association with a specific "owner" of the thought. Thought and thinker, subject and object, are tightly coupled. The objectivization of thought itself is impossible. Hence one must not neglect the circumstances under which thought becomes the subject of contemplation. "Our mental reaction to every given thing is really a resultant of our experience in the whole world up to that date. From one year to another we see things in new lights. . . . The young girls that brought an aura of infinity—at present hardly distinguishable existences; the pictures—so empty; and as for the books, what was there to find so mysteriously significant in Goethe?" One can here imagine the sympathetic response of Bohr, who wrote, "for objective description and harmonious comprehension it is necessary in almost every field of knowledge to pay attention to the circumstances under which evidence is obtained."

There is another sense in which consciousness cannot be concretized and atomized. James writes, "Consciousness does not appear to itself chopped up in bits; it flows. Let us call it the stream of thought, of consciousness, or of subjective life." Yet there does exist a discontinuous aspect: the "changes, from one moment to another, in the quality of the consciousness." If we use the vocabulary of quantum theory, James here proposes a sequence of individual changes between stationary states, with short periods of rest in these states—a metaphor that brings to mind Bohr's notion of 1912–1913 of the behavior of the electron in the hydrogen atom. To quote James, "Like a bird's life, [thought] seems to be made of an alternation of flights and perchings. The rhythm of language expresses this, where

every thought is expressed in a sentence and every sentence closed by a period. . . . Let us call the resting places the 'substantive parts,' and the places of flight the 'transitive parts,' of the stream of thought."

But here enters a difficulty: in fact, the same one that plagued the student in Møller's story. The difficulty is, in James's words, "introspectively, to see the transitive parts for what they really are. If they are but flights to conclusions, stopping them to look at them before a conclusion is reached is really annihilating them." However, if one waits until one's consciousness is again in a stationary state, then the moment is over. James says, "Let anyone try to cut a thought across in the middle and get a look at its section, and he will see how difficult the introspective observation of the transitive tract is. . . . Or if our purpose is nimble enough and we do arrest it, it ceases forthwith to be itself. . . . The attempt at introspective analysis in these cases is in fact like . . . trying to turn up the light quickly enough to see how the darkness looks." Letting thoughts flow, and making thoughts the subject of introspective analysis are, as it were, two mutually exclusive experimental situations.

It is from such a vantage point that one may attempt to interpret some of the novel features of Bohr's 1927 paper on complementarity to have been influenced either by a reading of James, or by thinking independently on parallel lines—and thereby understand better the final passage in Bohr's paper: "I hope, however, that the idea of complementarity is suited to characterize the situation, which bears a deep-going analogy to the general difficulty in the formation of human ideas, inherent in the distinction between subject and object."³³

At this point, one might well ask where the term *complementarity* itself, which Bohr introduced into physics in 1927, may have come from. There are a number of fields from which the term may have been adapted, including geometry or topology. But both Meyer-Abich and Jammer point to a more provocative possibility, namely the chapter "The Relations of Minds to Other Things," in William James's *Principles of Psychology* (1890), just one chapter prior to that on the "stream of thought." In the subsection "'Unconsciousness' in Hysterics," James relates cases of hysterical anaesthesia (loss of the natural perception of sight, hearing, touch, and so on), and notes that P. Janet and A. Binet "have shown that during the times of anesthesia, and coexisting with it, *sensibility to the anaesthetic parts is also there,*

in the form of a secondary consciousness entirely cut off from the primary or normal one, but susceptible of being *tapped* and made to testify to its existence in various odd ways."³⁴

The chief method for tapping was Janet's method of "distraction." If Janet put himself behind hysteric patients who were "plunged in conversation with a third party, and addressed them in a whisper telling them to raise their hand or perform other simple acts [including writing out answers to whispered questions] they would obey the order given, although their *talking* intelligence was quite unconscious of receiving it."³⁵ If interrogated in this way, hysterics responded perfectly normally when, for example, their sensibility to touch was examined on areas of skin that had been shown previously to be entirely anaesthetic when examined through their primary consciousness.

In addition, some hysterics could deal with certain sensations only in either one consciousness *or* the other, but not in both at the same time. Here James cites a famous experiment in a striking passage:

M. Janet has proved this beautifully in his subject Lucie. The following experiment will serve as the type of the rest: In her trance he covered her lap with cards, each bearing a number. He then told her that on waking she should *not see* any card whose number was a multiple of three. This is the ordinary so-called "post-hypnotic suggestion," now well known, and for which Lucie was a well-adapted subject. Accordingly, when she was awakened and asked about the papers on her lap, she counted and said she saw those only whose number was not a multiple of 3. To the 12, 18, 9, etc., she was blind. But the *hand*, when the sub-conscious self was interrogated by the usual method of engrossing the upper self in another conversation, wrote that the only cards in Lucie's lap were those numbered 12, 18, 9, etc., and on being asked to pick up all the cards which were there, picked up these and let the others lie. Similarly when the sight of certain things was suggested to the sub-conscious Lucie, the normal Lucie suddenly became partially or totally blind. "What is the matter? I can't see!" the normal personage suddenly cried out in the midst of her conversation, when M. Janet whispered to the secondary personage to make use of her eyes.³⁶

James gives these and other examples to support a conclusion in which he defines the concept of complementarity in psychological research:

It must be admitted, therefore, that in *certain persons*, at least, *the total possible consciousness may be split into parts which coexist but mutually ignore each other*, and share the objects of knowledge between them. More

remarkable still, they are *complementary*. Give an object to one of the consciousnesses, and by that fact you remove it from the other or others. Barring a certain common fund of information, like the command of language, etc., what the upper self knows the under self is ignorant of, and *vice versa*.³⁷

The analogy with Bohr's concept of complementarity in physics is striking, quite apart from the question of the genetic connection between these two uses of the same word.

CHRISTIAN BOHR AND HARALD HØFFDING

Bohr's affinity for ideas analogous to those of William James was preceded by a philosophical and personal preparation that goes back to his childhood. In his essay "Glimpses of Niels Bohr as a Scientist and Thinker," Oskar Klein, one of Bohr's earliest collaborators, provides a revealing picture of the young man.

Niels Bohr himself and his brother Harald, a brilliant mathematician, liked to give examples of the innocently credulous—and at the same time resolute—way in which as a child he accepted what he saw and heard. They also spoke of geometrical intuition he developed so early The first feature appeared for instance in believing literally what he learned from the lessons on religion at school. For a long time this made the sensitive boy unhappy on account of his parents' lack of faith. When later, as a young man, he began to doubt, he did so also with unusual resolution and thereby developed a deep philosophical bent similar to that which seems to have characterized the early Greek natural philosophers.³⁸

Christian Bohr, Niels Bohr's father, was professor of physiology at the University of Copenhagen. His work involved him in one of the important philosophical debates of the last part of the nineteenth century, the differences between and relative merits of the "vitalistic" theories and the mechanistic conceptions of life processes. In several ways, Christian Bohr's interests shaped his son's ideas and preoccupations. We know that as a youth, Niels Bohr was allowed to work in the laboratory of his father and to meet the scholars interested in philosophy with whom Christian Bohr kept close contact, such as Harald Høffding, professor of philosophy at the University in Copenhagen. Høffding often visited the Bohr household, and Niels Bohr attested to the profound influence he received from early

childhood by being permitted to stay and listen during meetings of an informal club made up of his father, Høffding, the physicist Christian Christiansen, and the philologist Hans Thomsen. Høffding, in turn, described Christian Bohr as a scientist who recognized "strict application of physical and chemical methods of physiology" in the laboratory, but who, outside the laboratory, "was a keen worshipper of Goethe. When he spoke of practical situations or of views of life, he liked to do so in a dialectic manner."³⁹

We may understand the implications of this description best through Oskar Klein, who remembers a characterization which Niels Bohr gave him: "He mentioned his father's idea that teleology, when we want to describe the behavior of living beings, may be a point of view on a par with that of causality. This idea was later to play an essential role in Bohr's attempt to throw light on the relation between the biologist's and the physicist's way of describing nature."⁴⁰

Niels Bohr entered the university in 1903 and soon took Høffding's course in the history of philosophy and logic. He also belonged to a student's club in which the questions raised in Høffding's lectures on philosophy were discussed. (Another member was Rubin.) While Bohr, as indicated in his last interview, felt no great attraction to philosophical systems (such as those of "Spinoza, Hume, and Kant"), there is little doubt about the lasting impression Høffding made on Bohr—perhaps most of all because of Høffding's active interest in the applicability to philosophy of the work of what he called *philosofierende Naturforscher*, from Copernicus to Newton and from Maxwell to Mach. For example, the latter two are discussed at some length in Høffding's *Moderne Philosophen*, which appeared in 1904 in Danish (1905 in German) as successor to his monumental *History of Modern Philosophy*.

There also appears to have been a personal sympathy between the older and the younger man. While still Høffding's student, Bohr pointed out some error in Høffding's exposition, and Høffding, in turn, allowed Bohr to help him correct proofs of the offending passage. A warm friendship developed eventually that was freely acknowledged on both sides, as indicated, for example, by Niels Bohr's acknowledgment of Harald Høffding's influence on him, on the occasion of Høffding's eighty-fifth birthday,⁴¹ and conversely in letters of Høffding to Emile Meyerson in 1926 and 1928.⁴² The first of these letters, incidentally, is dated December 13, 1926, shortly

before Bohr's vacation trip to Norway in early 1927, during which, according to Heisenberg and others, Bohr's ideas on complementarity were developed in the form he announced later in 1927. Another letter was written half a year after the presentation of the complementarity principle at Como. In it, Høffding writes to Meyerson (March 13, 1928): "Bohr declares that he has found in my books ideas which have helped the scientists in the 'understanding' of their work, and thereby they have been of real help. This is great satisfaction for me, who feels so often the insufficiency of my special preparation with respect to the natural sciences."⁴³

Among all the philosophers and scientists discussed by Høffding, it is unlikely that any interested student of Høffding's will have failed to encounter some aspect of William James's work. An admirer, like James, of G. T. Fechner (the father of psychophysics), Høffding devoted his first book to psychology (Danish edition, 1882). At about the time Bohr took his philosophy course, Høffding used the occasion of the St. Louis meeting of 1904 to visit James in the United States. James, in turn, supplied an appreciative preface for the English translation (of 1905) of Høffding's *Problems of Philosophy*—a book which Høffding reported later to have originated in his university lectures in 1902.⁴⁴ And in the same year of Høffding's visit to James, Høffding expressed in his *Moderne Philosophen* his admiration for James's work, to whom the concluding chapter is devoted, with such comments as "James belongs to the most outstanding contemporary thinkers. . . . The most important of his writings is *The Principles of Psychology*."

KIERKEGAARD

In Høffding's own life, a crucial and early influence was the work of Kierkegaard, as he freely confessed.⁴⁵ Høffding reported that in a youthful crisis in which he was near "despair," he had found solace and new strength through Kierkegaard's writings, and he mentions particularly Kierkegaard's work now known as *Stages on Life's Way*. Høffding became known as one of the prominent exponents and followers of Kierkegaard; indeed, the second major work Høffding published was the book *Kierkegaard als Philosoph*.⁴⁶

Whether Niels Bohr caught some of his own interest in Kierkegaard while a student of Høffding is not known, but the fact of this

early interest is well documented. Thus it is remembered that in 1909 Niels sent his brother Harald as a birthday gift Kierkegaard's book *Stages on Life's Way*, with a letter saying, "It is the only thing I have to send; but I do not believe that it would be very easy to find anything better. In any case I have had very much pleasure in reading it, I even think that it is one of the most delightful things I have ever read."⁴⁷ Then he added that he did not fully agree with all of Kierkegaard's views. One can well imagine that Niels Bohr could enjoy the aesthetic experience and the moral passion without having to agree also with the antiscientific attitude of much of the work.

Bohr's remarks about Kierkegaard bring us to the last of the various possible avenues that prepared for the complementarity notion. While this is not the proper place for a searching examination of those elements in Kierkegaard's works for which analogous elements have been noted in Bohr's work,⁴⁸ it will be of interest to remind ourselves of one or two chief features that characterized the writing of both Kierkegaard and his chief interpreter in Denmark, Høffding.

Kierkegaard's existentialism was rooted in German Romanticism, upholding the individual and the momentary life situation in which he finds himself against the rationality and objective abstraction championed by the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. The denial of the subjective, Kierkegaard argued, leads to self-contradictions, for even the most abstract proposition remains the creation of human beings. In a reaction to Hegel and to some aspects of Kant, Kierkegaard wrote about science in his journal: "Let it deal with plants and animals and stars, but to deal with the human spirit in that way is blasphemy, which only weakens ethical and religious passions." Truth cannot be found without incorporating the subjective, particularly in the essentially irrational, discontinuous stages of recognitions leading to the achievement of insight. As J. Passmore writes, "each major step on the way to truth is a free decision. Our progress, according to Kierkegaard, from the aesthetic to the scientific point of view, and then again from the scientific to the ethical and from the ethical to the religious, cannot be rationalized into an orderly, formally justifiable, step from premise to conclusions: It is in each case a leap to a quite new way of looking at things."⁴⁹

What is perhaps of greatest interest to us is the accentuation of the role of discontinuity in Kierkegaard's work. Here we can do no better

than cite at some length the section on Kierkegaard in Høffding's own chief work, *A History of Modern Philosophy*:

[Kierkegaard's] leading idea was that the different possible conceptions of life are so sharply opposed to one another that we must make a choice between them, hence his catchword *either—or*; moreover, it must be a choice which each particular person must make for himself, hence his second catchword, *the individual*. He himself designated his thought "qualitative dialectic," by which he meant to bring out its opposition to the doctrine taught by Romantic speculation of continuous development by means of necessary inner transitions. Kierkegaard regarded this doctrine as pure fantasticalness—a fantasticalness, to be sure, to which he himself had felt attracted.⁵⁰

What is essential for us to notice is that a main feature of Kierkegaard's "qualitative dialectic" is an acceptance of thesis and antithesis, *without* proceeding to another stage at which the tension is resolved in a synthesis. Thus he draws a line between thought and reality which must not be allowed to disappear. Høffding writes: "Even if thought should attain coherency it does not therefore follow that this coherency can be preserved in the practice of life Such great differences and oppositions exist side by side that there is no thought which can embrace them all in a 'higher unity.'"⁵¹ "Kierkegaard came more and more to regard the capability of embracing great contrasts and of enduring the suffering which this involves as the criterion of the sublimity and value of a conception of life."⁵²

Kierkegaard's stress on discontinuity between incompatibles, on the "leap" rather than the gradual transition, on the inclusion of the individual, and on inherent dichotomy, was as "nonclassical" in philosophy as the elements of the Copenhagen doctrine—quantum jumps, probabilistic causality, observer-dependent description, and duality—were to be in physics.

Now it would be as absurd as it is unnecessary to try to demonstrate that Kierkegaard's conceptions were directly and in detail translated by Bohr from their theological and philosophical context to a physical context. Of course, they were not. All one should do is permit oneself the open-minded experience of reading Høffding and Kierkegaard through the eyes of a person who is primarily a physicist—struggling, as Bohr was, first with his 1912–1913 work on atomic models, and again in 1927, to "discover a certain coherence

in the new ideas” while pondering the conflicting, paradoxical, unresolvable demands of classical physics and quantum physics which were the near-despair of most physicists of the time. It is in this frame of mind that one can best appreciate, for example, Høffding’s discussion of Kierkegaard’s indeterministic notion of the “leap”:

In Kierkegaard’s ethics the qualitative dialectic appears partly in his conception of choice, of the decision of the will, partly in his doctrine of stages. He emphatically denies that there is any analogy between spiritual and organic development. No gradual development takes place within the spiritual sphere, such as might explain the transition from deliberation to decision, or from one conception of life (or “stadium”) to another. Continuity would be broken in every such transition. As regards the choice, psychology is only able to point out possibilities and approximations, motives and preparations. The choice itself comes with a jerk, with a leap, in which something quite new (a new quality) is posited. Only in the world of possibilities is there continuity; in the world of reality decision always comes through a breach of continuity.

But, it might be asked, cannot this jerk or this leap itself be made an object of psychological observation? Kierkegaard’s answer is not clear. He explains that the leap takes place between two moments, between two states, one of which is the last state in the world of possibilities, the other the first state in the world of reality. It would almost seem to follow from this that the leap itself cannot be observed. But then it would also follow that it takes place unconsciously—and the possibility of the unconscious continuity underlying the conscious antithesis is not excluded.⁵³

It is at this point that the writings of Høffding and Kierkegaard most evidently overlap with the teachings of William James. In fact, there are two specific periods where the overlapping conceptions of Kierkegaard, Høffding, and James can plausibly have been influential for Bohr in the sense of providing sympathetic preparation or support. One came in Bohr’s work during the early period, from 1912 through the correspondence point of view (that is, in the analogy between Bohr’s nonclassical transitions of the electron between stationary states on the one hand and Kierkegaard’s “leaps” or James’s transient flights and “transitive parts” on the other hand). The other came in the period from about 1926, when Bohr’s complementarity point of view was being developed; and here we have already pointed to possible sources or antecedents for Bohr’s analogies in passages such as the conclusion of his September 1927

address ("the idea of complementarity is suited to characterize the situation, which bears a profound analogy to the general difficulty in the formation of human ideas, inherent in the distinction between subject and object"), as well as passages in a paper of 1929 ("Strictly speaking, the conscious analysis of any concept stands in a relation of exclusion to its immediate application. . . . The necessity of taking recourse to a complementary, or reciprocal mode of description is perhaps familiar to us from psychological problems. . . . In particular, the apparent contrast between the continuous onward flow of associative thinking and the preservation of the unity of the personality exhibits a suggestive analogy with the relation between the wave description of the motions of material particles, governed by the superposition principle, and their indestructible individuality").⁵⁴

One characteristic trait of Bohr should not be overlooked in this discussion, for without it the predisposition necessary for reaching the complementarity point of view would have been missing. I refer to Bohr's well-known dialectic style of thinking and of working. One of those who worked with him longest, Léon Rosenfeld, attests that Bohr's "turn of mind was essentially dialectical, rather than reflective. . . . He needed the stimulus of some form of dialogue to start off his thinking."⁵⁵ Rosenfeld also records a well-known dictum of Bohr: "Every sentence I say must be understood not as an affirmation, but as a question." Bohr's habit of work was frequently to develop a paper during dictation, walking up and down the room and arguing both with himself and a fellow physicist whom he had persuaded to be his sounding board, transcriber, and critic—and whom he was likely to leave in an exhausted state at the end. As Einstein, Heisenberg, Schrödinger, and many others had to experience, it seemed as if Bohr looked for and fastened with greatest energy on a contradiction, heating it to its utmost before he could crystallize the pure metal out of the dispute. Bohr's method of argument shared with the complementarity principle itself the ability to exploit the clash between antithetical positions. We have given earlier only the first line of a couplet from Schiller, reported to have been one of Bohr's favorite sayings: after the line "Only wholeness leads to clarity" there follows "And truth lies in the abyss":

Nur die Fülle führt zur Klarheit,
Und im Abgrund wohnt die Wahrheit.

Of Niels Bohr stories there are legions, but none more illuminating than that told by his son Hans concerning the fundamentally dialectic definition of truth. Hans reports that one of the favorite maxims of his father was the distinction between two sorts of truth: trivialities, where opposites are obviously absurd, and profound truths, recognized by the fact that the opposite is also a profound truth.⁵⁶ Along the same line, there has been a persistent story that Bohr had been impressed by an example or analogue for the complementarity concept in the mutually exclusive demands of justice and of love. Jerome S. Bruner has kindly given me a first-hand report of a conversation on this point that took place when he happened to meet Niels Bohr in 1943 or early 1944 for the first time: "The talk turned entirely on the complementarity between affect and thought, and between perception and reflection. [Bohr] told me that he had become aware of the psychological depths of the concept of complementarity when one of his children had done something inexcusable for which he found himself incapable of appropriate punishment: 'You cannot know somebody at the same time in the light of love and in the light of justice!' I think that those were almost exactly the words he used. He also. . . . talked about the manner in which introspection as an act dispelled the very emotion that one strove to describe."⁵⁷

COMPLEMENTARITY BEYOND PHYSICS

We can now ask: what was Bohr's real ambition for the complementarity conception? It certainly went far beyond dealing with the paradoxes in the physics of the 1920s. Not only were some of the roots of the complementarity principle outside physics, but so also was its intended range of application. Let me remind you of Bohr's statement: "The integrity of living organisms, and the characteristics of conscious individuals, and most of human cultures, present features of wholeness, the account of which implies a typically complementary mode of description. . . . We are not dealing with more or less vague analogies, but with clear examples of logical relations which, in different contexts, are met with in wider fields."⁵⁸ The complementarity principle is a manifestation of a thema in a sense which I have previously developed⁵⁹—one thema in the relatively small pool of themata from which the imagination draws for all

fields of endeavor. When we devote attention to a particular thema in physics or some other science, whether it be complementarity, or atomism, or continuity, we must not forget that each special statement of the thema is an aspect of a general conception which, in the work of a physicist or biologist or other scientist, is exemplified merely in a specific form. Thus a general thema, θ , would take on a specific form in physics that might be symbolized by θ_ϕ , in psychological investigation by θ_ψ , in folklore by θ_μ , and so on. The general thema of discontinuity or discreteness thus appears in physics as the θ_ϕ of atomism, whereas in psychological studies it appears as the thema θ_ψ of individualized identity. One may express a given θ as the sum of its specific exemplifications, as symbolized (without straining for precision) by the expression:

$$\theta = \sum_{n=\alpha}^{n=\omega} \theta_n$$

From this point of view we realize that Bohr's proposal of the complementarity principle was nothing less than an attempt to make it the cornerstone of a new epistemology. When "in general philosophical perspective . . . we are confronted with situations reminding us of the situation in quantum physics,"⁶⁰ it is not that those situations are in some way pale reflections or "vague analogies" of a principle that is basic only in quantum physics; rather, the situation in quantum physics is only one reflection of an all-pervasive principle. Whatever the most prominent factors were which contributed to Bohr's formulation of the complementarity point of view in physics—whether his physical research or thoughts on psychology, or reading in philosophical problems, or controversy between rival schools in biology, or the complementary demands of love and justice in everyday dealings—it was the *universal* significance of the role of complementarity which Bohr came to emphasize.

Moreover, this universality explains how it was possible for Bohr to gain insight for his work in physics from considerations of complementary situations in other fields. For as Léon Rosenfeld accurately remarks, "As his insight into the role of complementarity in physics deepened in the course of these creative years, he was able to point to situations in psychology and biology that also present complementary aspects; and the considerations of such analogies in

epistemological respect in its turn threw light on the unfamiliar physical problems.”⁶¹ “Bohr devoted a considerable amount of hard work to exploring the possibilities of application of complementarity to other domains of knowledge; he attached no less importance to this task than to his purely physical investigations, and he derived no less satisfaction from its accomplishment.”⁶²

During the last thirty years of his life, Bohr took many opportunities to consider the application of the complementarity concept in fields outside of physics. Rosenfeld reports that the first important opportunity of this kind offered itself when Bohr was invited to address a biological congress in Copenhagen in 1932.⁶³ Starting from the idea of complementarity as used for understanding the dual aspects of light, Bohr then proceeded to point to the application of complementarity relations in biology. Rosenfeld’s account of the talk is worth citing in detail:

This had a special appeal to him: He had been deeply impressed by his father’s views on the subject, and he was visibly happy at being now able to take them up and give them a more adequate formulation. [His father], in the work of the reaction against mechanistic materialism at the beginning of the century, had put up a vigorous advocacy of the teleological point of view in the study of physiology: without the previous knowledge of the function of an organ, he argued, there is no hope of unravelling its structure for the physiological processes of which it is the seed. At the same time, he stressed, with all the authority of a life devoted to the analysis of the physical and chemical aspects of such processes, the equally imperious necessity of pushing this analysis to the extreme limit which the technical means of investigation would permit us to reach . . .

Such reflections came as near as one would expect at the time to establishing a relation of complementarity between the physico-chemical side of the vital processes, governed by the kind of causality they are accustomed to herald as the truly scientific one, and the properly functional aspect of these processes, dominated by teleological or finalistic causality. In the past, the two points of view, under varying forms, have always been put in sharp opposition to each other, the general opinion being that one of them had to prevail to the exclusion of the other, that there was no room for both in the science of life. Niels Bohr could now point out that this last belief was only the result of a conception of logic which the physicists had recognized as too narrow, and that the wider frame of complementarity seemed particularly well suited to accommodate the two standpoints, and make it possible without any contradiction to take advantage of both of them, quite

in the spirit of his father's ideas. Thus an age-long sterile conflict would be eliminated and replaced by a full utilization of all the resources of scientific analysis.⁶⁴

One need not be tempted into imagining Bohr in a Hamletlike striving to establish his father's ideas; but one also need not remain untouched by the closing of the circle. For surely one of the paths leading to complementarity had opened while Niels Bohr was in his father's laboratory and shop club.

In the years following the congress of 1932 Bohr took his point of view before an even wider audience; in addition to his written and spoken contributions before physical scientists, he presented himself at such meetings as the Second International Congress for the Unity of Science in Copenhagen (June 1936) in a discussion on "causality and complementarity"; the International Congress for physics and Biology in October 1937 on "biology and atomic physics"; the International Congress for Anthropology and Ethnology, Copenhagen, 1938, on "natural philosophy and human cultures"; and on many later occasions of a similar sort.⁶⁵

In each of these lectures Bohr provided a new set of illustrations of the common theme. Thus in his address before the anthropologists in 1938, on the eve of World War II, Bohr stressed complementary features of human societies. He also returned to the problem posed by the student (*licentiate*) in Møller's story. As Rosenfeld writes:

He could now look back at the duality of aspects of psychical experience with all the mastery he had acquired over the nature of complementarity relations, and point out that this duality corresponded to different ways of drawing between the psychical process which was chosen as the object of observation and the observing subject: drawing such a separation is precisely what we mean when we speak of fixing our attention on a definite aspect of the process; according as we draw the line, we may experience an emotion as part of our subjective feeling, or analyze it as part of the observed process. The realization that these two situations are complementary solves the riddle of the licentiate's egos observing each other, and is in fact the only salvation from his qualms.⁶⁶

Speaking before the Congress of the Fondation Européenne de la culture in Copenhagen on October 21, 1960, in an address entitled "The Unity of Human Knowledge," Bohr returned again to the need to search, within the great diversity of cultural developments, "for

those features in all civilizations which have their roots in the common human situation." He developed these ideas in sociological and political contexts, particularly since he was increasingly more preoccupied with helping to "promote mutual understanding between nations with very different cultural backgrounds."⁶⁷ Deeply concerned about the danger of the Cold War, Bohr spent a good part of his later years on political and social questions, including work on plans for peaceful uses of nuclear energy and for arms control. In these and other articles on this topic, one can discern Bohr's dissatisfaction with his own state of understanding; the problems posed by national antagonisms did not seem to be fully understandable in the same terms that had seemed to him successful in physics and psychology. As he confessed at the end of his lecture before the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1957, "The fact that human cultures, developed under different conditions of living, exhibit such contrasts with respect to established traditions and social patterns allows one, in a certain sense, to call such cultures complementary. However, we are here in no way dealing with definite, mutually exclusive features, such as those we meet in the objective description of general problems of physics and psychology, but the differences in attitude which can be appreciated or ameliorated by an expanded intercourse between peoples."⁶⁸

Bohr returned to the same theme repeatedly. For example, in the essay quoted earlier, "The Unity of Human Knowledge," Bohr reexamined the requirement that even the most abstract principles of quantum physics, for example, must be capable of being rendered in commonsense, classical language. "The aim of our argumentation," Bohr wrote, "is to emphasize that all experience, whether in science, philosophy, or art, which may be helpful to mankind, must be capable of being communicated by human means of expression, and it is on this basis that we shall approach the question of unity of knowledge."⁶⁹

The last phrase, used in the title of the essay, suddenly puts into perspective for us that Bohr's manifold and largely successful ambitions place him in the tradition typified by another "philosophizing scientist," one who belonged to the generation before Bohr—a man whom Bohr, like many others, had read early, and whose views Høffding had described in a sympathetic way in his *Moderne Philosophen* and in *Problems of Philosophy*. It is Ernst Mach.

Bohr seems to have mapped out for himself the same grand, interdisciplinary task—in his forceful and innovative influence on physics and on epistemology, in his deep interest in the sciences far beyond physics itself, even in his active and liberal views on social-political questions. And as physicist, physiologist, psychologist, and philosopher, Ernst Mach had also wanted to find a principal point of view from which research in any field could be more meaningfully pursued. This point of view Mach thought to have found by going back to that which is given before all scientific research, namely the world of sensations. On this basis, Mach had established himself as the patriarch of the Unity of Science movement. In his turn, Niels Bohr, starting from the profound reexamination of the problem of sensation and particularly of object-subject interaction, also hoped he had found (in the complementarity point of view) a new platform from which to evaluate and solve the basic problems in a variety of fields, whether in physics, psychology, physiology, or philosophy.

Bohr's achievement, from 1927 on, of attaining such a principal point of view was not an accidental development. On the contrary, it was the fulfillment of an early ambition. A biographer of Bohr records that "as a young student, fired with the ideas Høffding was opening to him, Bohr had dreamed of 'great inter-relationships' between all areas of knowledge. He had even considered writing a book on the theory of knowledge But physics had drawn him irresistibly."⁷⁰ In the end, Bohr's attempt to understand the unity of knowledge (a topic on which he wrote nearly two dozen papers) on the basis of complementarity could be seen as precisely the fulfillment of the desire to discover the "great inter-relationships among all areas of knowledge."

Bohr's aim has a grandeur which one must admire. But while his point of view is accepted by the large majority in physics itself, it would not be accurate to say that it is being widely understood and used in other fields; still less has it swept over philosophy the way Mach's views did during the generation of scientists brought up before the theory of relativity and quantum mechanics. Even those who in their professional work in physics have experienced the success of the complementarity point of view at first hand find it hard or uncongenial to transfer to other areas of thought and action, as a fundamental thematic attitude, the habit of accepting basic dualities without straining for their mutual dissolution or reduction. Indeed,

we tend to be first of all reductionists, perhaps partly because our early intellectual heroes have been men in the tradition of Mach and Freud, rather than Kierkegaard and James.

Perhaps, also, it is just a matter of time—more time needed to assimilate a new thema widely enough; to sort out the merely seductive and the solid applications; and to learn to perceive the kind of grandeur in the scope of the new notion which Robert Oppenheimer delineated:

An understanding of the complementary nature of conscious life and its physical interpretation appears to me a lasting element in human understanding and a proper formulation of the historic views called psychophysical parallelism. For within conscious life, and in its relations with the description of the physical world, there are again many examples. There is the relation between the cognitive and the affective sides of our lives, between knowledge or analysis, and emotion or feeling. There is the relation between the esthetic and the heroic, between feeling and that precursor and definer of action, the ethical commitment; there is the classical relation between the analysis of one's self, the determination of one's motives and purposes, and that freedom of choice, that freedom of decision and action, which are complementary to it . . .

To be touched with awe, or humor, to be moved by beauty, to make a commitment or a determination to understand some truth—these are complementary modes of the human spirit. All of them are part of man's spiritual life. None can replace the others, and where one is called for, the others are in abeyance . . .

The wealth and variety of physics itself, the greater wealth and variety of the natural sciences taken as a whole, the more familiar, yet still strange and far wider wealth of the life of the human spirit, enriched by complementary, not-at-once compatible ways, irreducible one to the other, have a greater harmony. They are the elements of man's sorrow and his splendor, his frailty and his power, his death, his passing, and his undying deeds.⁷¹

ENDNOTES

¹After much further work, Bohr published the lecture in 1928 under the title "The Quantum Postulate and the Recent Development of Atomic Theory"; it has been reprinted in several places, for example as one of four essays in the collection by Niels Bohr, *Atomtheorie und Naturbeschreibung* (Berlin: Springer, 1931), also published as *Atomic Theory and the Description of Nature* (Cambridge, England: University Press; New York: Macmillan, 1934).

²Bohr, "The Quantum Postulate," in *Atomic Theory and the Description of Nature*, 55.

³A. Einstein, "Das Comptonsche Experiment," *Berliner Tageblatt* (April 20, 1924), supplement, 1, cited by M. J. Klein, *A Twentieth-Century Challenge to Energy Conservation*.

⁴Bohr (in "The Quantum Postulate," *Atomic Theory and the Description of Nature*, 54–55) introduced the need for working out a "complementarity theory" in the following, rather overburdened sentence: "The very nature of the quantum theory thus forces us to regard the space-time coordination and the claim of causality, the union of which characterizes the classical theory, as complementary but exclusive features of the description, symbolizing the idealization of observation and definition respectively." Max Jammer, to whose book *The Conceptual Development of Quantum Mechanics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966, 351) we shall frequently refer, adds: "This statement, in which the term 'complementary' appears for the first time and in which spatiotemporal description is referred to as complementary to causal description, contained the essence of what later became known as the 'Copenhagen' interpretation of quantum mechanics."

Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, formulated early in 1927, had given a first indication of complementary relations between physical concepts, though in a restricted sense. The uncertainty principle tells us that if we attempt to localize a particle in space (or time), we shall, during the measurement process, impart to the particle momentum (or energy) within a range of values that increases as we decrease the size of the space-time region on which we wish to focus attention. Position and momentum are not mutually exclusive notions, since both are needed to specify the state of a system and both can be measured in the same experiment. But they are complementary in the restricted sense that they cannot both at the same time be ascertained with arbitrarily high precision; that is, the more precision is obtained in one measurement, the less it is possible to have in the other. In contrast, the wave-particle aspects of matter are complementary *and* mutually exclusive; an atomic entity cannot exhibit both its particle and its wave properties simultaneously. It is for this reason that textbooks often say that Bohr's statement of complementarity at Como transcended the Heisenberg uncertainty principle.

⁵Niels Bohr, "Discussion with Einstein on Epistemological Problems in Atomic Physics," in *Albert Einstein: Philosopher-Scientist*, ed. P. Schilpp (Evanston, Ill.: The Library of Living Philosophers, 1949), 209–10; italics in original.

⁶Jammer, *Conceptual Development of Quantum Mechanics*, 354.

⁷Translated from *ibid.*, 358.

⁸A. Einstein, "Reply to Criticisms," in Schilpp, *Albert Einstein*, 674.

⁹Bohr, "Discussion with Einstein," in Schilpp, *Albert Einstein*, 218.

¹⁰For some aspects of the early history of the theories of light, see the interesting book by Vasco Ronchi *Optics, the Science of Vision* (New York, 1957), or Johann Müller, *Lehrbuch der Physik* (Braunschweig: F. Vieweg und Sohn, 1926). I have relied on both extensively.

¹¹For example, see W. H. Bragg, *Philosophical Magazine* 20 (1910):358–416.

¹²Merle A. Tuve, in *The Search for Understanding*, ed. Caryl P. Haskins (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution, 1967), 46.

¹³Jammer, *Conceptual Development of Quantum Mechanics*, 87.

- ¹⁴Quoted, with permission, from a letter of Niels Bohr in the American Philosophical Society Library, Philadelphia. I thank Dorothy Goodhue Livingston for having drawn this letter to my attention.
- ¹⁵N. Bohr, H. A. Kramers, and J. C. Slater, "The Quantum Theory of Radiation," *Philosophical Magazine* 47 (1924):785. The German version is in *Zeitschrift für Physik* 24 (1924):69.
- ¹⁶E. Schrödinger, "Quantisierung als Eigenwertproblem," *Annalen der Physik* 79 (1926):375.
- ¹⁷Jammer, *Conceptual Development of Quantum Mechanics*, 271–72; italics in original.
- ¹⁸*Ibid.*, 271.
- ¹⁹As quoted, *ibid.*, 272.
- ²⁰See "On the Thematic Analysis of Science: The Case of Poincaré and Relativity," *Mélanges Alexandre Koyré*, vol. 2 (Paris: Hermann, 1964):257–68; "The Thematic Imagination in Science," in Gerald Holton, ed., *Science and Culture* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), 88–108; "Science and New Styles of Thought," *The Graduate Journal* 7 (Spring 1967):399–421.
- ²¹Oskar Klein, "Glimpses of Niels Bohr as Scientist and Thinker," in S. Rozental, ed., *Niels Bohr—His Life and Work as Seen by His Friends and Colleagues* (New York: John Wiley, 1967), 93.
- ²²Niels Bohr, *Essays 1958–1962 on Atomic Physics and Human Knowledge* (New York: John Wiley, 1963), 7; italics supplied.
- ²³L. Rosenfeld, "Niels Bohr in the Thirties," in Rozental, *Niels Bohr*, 121.
- ²⁴Cited in Bohr's essay "The Unity of Human Knowledge" (1960), in *Essays 1958–1962*, and in L. Rosenfeld, "Niels Bohr's Contribution to Epistemology," *Physics Today* 16 (1963):63. In this article and elsewhere, Rosenfeld has insisted on the importance of the story for Bohr; moreover, Rosenfeld believes that the struggle of the student with his many egos was "the only object lesson in dialectical thinking that Bohr ever received and the only link between his highly original reflection and philosophical tradition" (p. 48).
- ²⁵Bohr, "The Unity of Human Knowledge," in *Essays 1958–1962*, 12.
- ²⁶*Ibid.*, 14.
- ²⁷The permission granted by the estate of Niels Bohr and the American Philosophical Society to reproduce this section of the interview is gratefully acknowledged.
- ²⁸Bohr, "The Quantum of Action and the Description of Nature," in *Atomic Theory and the Description of Nature*.
- ²⁹Letter to the author, February 28, 1968.
- ³⁰*Ibid.* In an interview conducted with Werner Heisenberg by T. S. Kuhn for the History of Quantum Physics project on February 11, 1963, Heisenberg volunteered that James was one of Bohr's favorite philosophers; the chapter on the "stream of thought" seemed to have made a profound impression on Bohr. Heisenberg placed these discussions somewhere between 1926 and 1929, most probably around 1927. When told of doubts about the timing, Heisenberg responded that he could not "guarantee" that these discussions with Bohr had not been after 1932.
- ³¹Rosenfeld, "Niels Bohr's Contribution to Epistemology," 49. See also L. Rosenfeld, *Niels Bohr* (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Co., 1945, 1961), 12–13.
- ³²We follow here the sequence given in Meyer-Abich, *Korrespondenz*, 133ff.

- ³³Bohr, "The Quantum Postulate," in *Atomic Theory and the Description of Nature*, 91.
- ³⁴William James, *Principles of Psychology*, vol. 1 (New York: Dover, 1950), 203; italics in original in all passages quoted from *Principles of Psychology*.
- ³⁵*Ibid.*, 204.
- ³⁶*Ibid.*, 206–07.
- ³⁷*Ibid.*, 206.
- ³⁸In Rozental, *Niels Bohr*, 74. One notices here the remarkable similarity of Bohr's experience with that recorded in Einstein's autobiographical notes—the same early religious acceptance in contrast to his parents' beliefs, followed by a loss or rejection of "the religious paradise of youth," as Einstein called it.
- ³⁹As quoted in Rozental, *Niels Bohr*, 13.
- ⁴⁰Klein, "Glimpses of Niels Bohr," 76.
- ⁴¹See Jammer, *Conceptual Development of Quantum Mechanics*, 349.
- ⁴²*Ibid.*, 347, 349.
- ⁴³Ruth Moore, in her book *Niels Bohr* (New York: Knopf, 1966), 432, records that on one wall of Bohr's house in Carlsberg, there "were portraits of those nearest to Bohr, grouped reverentially together": Bohr's father and mother, his brother Harald, his grandfather Adler, and "Bohr's teacher Høffding. If any doubts existed of Høffding's influence on Bohr's life, it was settled by the placement of his portrait."
- ⁴⁴H. Høffding, in R. Schmidt, ed., *Die Philosophie der Gegenwart in Selbstdarstellungen* (Leipzig: Felix Meiner, 1923), 86.
- ⁴⁵For example, *ibid.*, 75.
- ⁴⁶Danish edition, 1892; German edition, 1896.
- ⁴⁷In Rozental, *Niels Bohr*, 27. See also the account of J. Rud Nielsen, "Memories of Niels Bohr," *Physics Today* 16 (1963):27–28. Referring to a visit from Bohr in 1933, Nielsen wrote: "Knowing Bohr's interest in Kierkegaard, I mentioned to him the translations made by Prof. Hollander of the University of Texas, and Bohr began to talk about Kierkegaard: 'He made a powerful impression upon me when I wrote my dissertation in a parsonage in Funen, and I read his works night and day,' he told me. 'His honesty and willingness to think the problems through to their very limit is what is great. And his language is wonderful, often sublime. There is of course much in Kierkegaard that I cannot accept. I ascribe that to the time in which he lived. But I admire his intensity and perseverance, his analysis to the utmost limit, and the fact that through these qualities he turned misfortune and suffering into something good.'"
- ⁴⁸A preliminary treatment of the subject has been made in the section "The Philosophical Background of Non-classical Interpretations," in Jammer, *Conceptual Development of Quantum Mechanics*, 166–80.
- ⁴⁹J. Passmore, *A Hundred Years of Philosophy* (New York: Basic Books, 1966), 480.
- ⁵⁰H. Høffding, *A History of Modern Philosophy*, vol. 2 (New York: Dover, 1955), 286. The work was originally issued in 1893 and intended to cover the ground to 1880. The English translation was published in 1900. Høffding also explored the role of discontinuity in other contexts, for example, in *Moderne Philosophen* (1904), where he contrasts at length the older *Kontinuitätsphilosophie* (as in Taine, Fouillée, Wundt, Ardigò) with the more recent *Diskontinuitätsphilosophie* (for example, Renouvier, "der Nestor der Philosophie der Gegenwart," and Boutroux).

⁵¹Ibid., 287.

⁵²Ibid., 288.

⁵³Ibid., 287–88.

⁵⁴Bohr, “The Quantum of Action,” in *Atomic Theory and the Description of Nature*, 96, 99.

⁵⁵Rosenfeld, “Niels Bohr in the Thirties,” in Rozental, *Niels Bohr*, 117.

⁵⁶Hans Bohr, “My Father,” in Rozental, *Niels Bohr*, 328.

⁵⁷Jerome S. Bruner, private communication to the author, December 25, 1967. Bruner added a comment which will become relevant to us in what follows below: “I knew Bohr for years afterwards and again spent several hours with him when he was at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, and he came to visit. He had an extraordinary sensitivity for psychological problems, and indeed he once repeated Mach’s famous remark about basically our only two sciences: one treats sensation as external and is physics, the other treats it as internal and is psychology. He did not cite this old saw of Mach’s approvingly, but urged that there was a grain of truth in it.”

⁵⁸Bohr, “Quantum Physics and Philosophy,” in *Essays 1958–1962*, 7.

⁵⁹See note 20, and C. Holton, “Stil und Verwirklichung in der Physik,” *Eranos Jahrbuch* 33 (Zurich: Rhein-Verlag, 1965), particularly 333ff.

⁶⁰Bohr, “Quantum Physics and Philosophy,” in *Essays 1958–1962*, 7.

⁶¹Rosenfeld, “Niels Bohr in the Thirties,” in Rozental, *Niels Bohr*, 116.

⁶²Ibid., 120.

⁶³Niels Bohr, “Light and Life,” address at the Second International Congress for Light Therapy, Copenhagen, August 1932, *Nature* 131 (1933):421–23, 457–59.

⁶⁴Rosenfeld, “Niels Bohr in the Thirties,” in Rozental, *Niels Bohr*, 132–33.

⁶⁵For a partial bibliography of Bohr’s writings, see Meyer-Abich, *Korrespondenz*, 191–99.

⁶⁶Rosenfeld, “Niels Bohr in the Thirties,” in Rozental, *Niels Bohr*, 135–36. A useful summary of Bohr’s views concerning the application of the complementarity conception to physics, biology, psychology, and social anthropology is given in Niels Bohr, “On Atoms and Human Knowledge,” *Dædalus* (Spring 1958), 164–75.

⁶⁷Bohr, “The Unity of Human Knowledge,” in *Essays 1958–1962*, 14–15.

⁶⁸Bohr, “On Atoms and Human Knowledge,” in *Essays*, 174–75.

⁶⁹Bohr, “The Unity of Human Knowledge,” in *Essays*, 14.

⁷⁰Moore, *Niels Bohr*, 406–07. There is a great deal of evidence of the large scale of Bohr’s later hopes along these lines. In his 1933 discussion, J. Rud Nielsen (“Memories of Niels Bohr,” 27) reports: “Bohr talked a good deal about his plans for future publications. ‘I believe that I have come to a certain stage of completion in my work,’ he said, ‘I believe that my conclusions have wide application also outside physics. . . . I should like to write a book that could be used as a text. I would show that it is possible to reach all important results with very little mathematics. In fact, in this manner one would in some respects achieve greater clarity.’ This book, which Bohr referred to as his testament, was never written.”

Similarly, Rosenfeld (“Niels Bohr’s Contributions to Epistemology,” 54) writes: “Bohr had great expectations about the future role of complementarity. He upheld them with unshakable optimism, never discouraged by the scant response he got from our unphilosophical age. . . . Bohr declared with intense animation that he saw the day when complementarity would be taught in the schools and become part of general education.”

⁷¹J. Robert Oppenheimer, *Science and the Common Understanding* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1953), 80–82.

Note: An early draft of this essay was presented at the *Tagung of Eranos* (August 1968). I have profited from discussions with students in my seminar, particularly Bernard Lo and Kellogg Steele, and with Dr. Arthur Miller.

Futures

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Frank E. Manuel

The Use and Abuse of Psychology in History

ALMOST A CENTURY AGO Friedrich Nietzsche, that history-intoxicated son of the German philological school, delivered a tirade against the hypertrophy of history in the life of his times. In appropriating the title of his essay, I confess to a similar ambivalence respecting the modern uses of psychology in historical studies. After some years of history writing I have begun to fear that I may be losing my way in the jungles of psychologism. In my predicament I could of course appeal to the analytical philosophers and ask them to enlighten me about the implicit assumptions of my work; but having read their interpretations of the writings of my colleagues I am obdurately resistant. Instead, I shall seek a way out of my perplexity by hearkening to the advice of Alfred North Whitehead, who once said that when a man is lost, he should not ask where *he* is, but where the *others* are. And so, advancing behind a chronological shield, I intend to locate myself by passing in critical review the experience of historians and psychologists whenever they have come into close proximity. After skimming over the eighteenth-century origin of their relationships, I shall concentrate on the last hundred years and even more especially on the recent period, when both disciplines have become mammoth academic enterprises, whose cohabitation, some might say, is doomed to sterility from the outset, like the improbable mating of a whale and an elephant. What my

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presentation lacks in depth and subtlety, I hope it may achieve in breadth. Perhaps at the end I may find a place for myself, and, who knows, others might be willing to join me even if it means standing midstream in rather shallow waters.

My level of discourse will not be hard-nosed and analytical but descriptive of the goals and achievements of those who sensed the rich potentialities of a new field of expression and proceeded to cultivate it. Men have been prospecting for a long time in this region, and I am less interested in the scientific theories they brought with them than in what they have carried back from their expeditions. Though I have not made an actual body count, I suspect that of late there has been more hortatory exposition of what might or should be done than perspective on what has in fact been going on. Commenting on the topos, on the content, of psychological history writing may prove more illuminating than either dissecting benighted historians who enjoy the *Narrenfreiheit* of blithely going their narrative way or issuing manifestos on what would constitute a perfect psychological history.

In the past three centuries major attempts have been made to recover not only the written thoughts of men of other times but their thinking; not only the record of their actions but the secret purposes and hidden, even unconscious, feelings that spurred and accompanied the *res gestae*; not only the literary and artistic objects but the sensibility that was expressed and the emotions aroused in the creators as well as in their contemporary audiences. When there are Pyrrhonists about who question the veracity of recorded history in its most commonsensical usage, how must they regard an undertaking that presumes to re-create inner experiences, which do not usually manifest themselves in clear-cut fashion through specific and forthright documents! And yet this is what psychological history has self-confidently set out to do. Admittedly, this wild intention has always been a minor element in historical narrative since the first Persian chronicles, echoed in the Book of Esther, where we are told what a personage "speaks in his heart." Greek and Roman historians used a variety of devices to disclose the secret purposes and unfulfilled desires animating their protagonists; and the Renaissance historians who imitated them availed themselves of a rich psychological vocabulary in describing the wellsprings of human conduct. It is only since

the early eighteenth century, however, that some historians have committed themselves to making the re-creation of inner experience the core of their work, shifting the focus from the deed to the psychic events that transpired in the doer.

I

More and more I see in Giambattista Vico, that lone Italian who lived in Naples from 1668 to 1744, the bold conceptualizer of this novel form of historical consciousness. In its exterior aspect his *Scienza nuova* was a rather conventional theology of history with a cyclical pattern. But if we look beyond the structure, we are amazed to find that he wrote of "*tre spezie di natura*," three kinds of human nature, and postulated that in each stage of a *ricorso* men had quintessentially different modes of perceiving reality, that not only the physical conditions but the feeling tone of existence was profoundly different in each one, that the very capacity for expression assumed radically different shapes: signs and emblems at one time the only way for mute humans to externalize feelings; poetry the only speech of barbaric men; and not until the rational epoch the voice of reason in prose. Every stage in the cycle was marked by its own balance between rational faculties and aggressive violence, between terror of death and a desire for convenience, between robust imagination and calculated punctiliousness. In sum, the nature of living—of thinking, feeling, and willing, the three traditional faculties—had undergone revolutions in time. And the changing quality of existence was discernible in the history of language, in literature and laws, and in visual arts like painting.

How was it possible for Vico, a man of the early eighteenth century, to interpret that evidence, to recapture the emotions and spirit of the age of heroic barbarism? His answer was that the cycle of history was imbedded in the human soul. Understanding of the transformations was possible because men in fact themselves lived through the whole of the cycle from primitivism to rationality in the course of their development from earliest infancy through adulthood. And all about in the world there remained vestiges of primitive mentality in savage countries and perhaps in the behavior of women.

The great French romantic historian of the next century, Jules Michelet, translated and commented on the works of Vico when they

were hardly known in Western culture. Michelet's voluminous history of France can be conceived as an effort to explore the changing consciousness of Frenchmen in their thousand years of national life. His dramatization of the Renaissance as a new way of perceiving the world was an innovation in the uses of psychology in history entirely in the spirit of Vico's "New Science." By mid-nineteenth century Michelet had at his disposal more refined psychological tools, some inherited from the utilitarian tradition of the Enlightenment, others derived from the works of Jean-Jacques, that great revealer of the previous age who had made himself transparent and bared his own complex private world as a model for every man.

In the latter part of the eighteenth century the Germans had a parallel to Vico in Herder, who imagined that through the course of world history an infinite number of human aggregates would be fashioned in isolation by the physical and climatic conditions of their living space and that each one, in a totally unique way, would forge for itself an idiosyncratic balance of sense perceptions which no other *Volk* could imitate. This *Volk*-genius was early embodied in a mythology, a religion, a poetry, in short a *Volk* culture, within the confines of which men of that *Volk* were forever fixed. In the later efflorescence of a culture, elements of reason might appear, but for all time every work of literature, art, and music was in its essence a reflection of the primitive, affective *Volk* psyche. Herder's universe pullulated with *Volk* cultures at different stages in their life cycles; and though he made feeble efforts to establish connexities among them in an overriding concept of *Humanität*, he was the founder of a particular type of German historicism that emphasized the search for concrete psychological "specificity"—the word is his friend Goethe's—in time and place. For both Vico and Herder the nature of things was hidden in the emotional differences among human collectives.

Hegel's contribution to psychological history does not, in my judgment, lie primarily in his characterization of the stages in the history of spirit, but rather in his power to grasp and present the phenomenological fullness of crucial human relationships—for example, his insightful diagnosis of the contrarities of the master-slave bond, and his depiction of *Entfremdung*, alienation, which was

passed on to Marx and Kierkegaard and has since been inflated as the central psychological distinction of modern consciousness.

II

In the last decades of the nineteenth century, there was a substantive discontinuity in the history of psychological history, a breakthrough. Psychology began to achieve a measure of recognition as an autonomous science in the German academic world. Though it had had a long literary and philosophical past—the name itself was invented by Rudolf Goclenius of Marburg in the sixteenth century—when psychology first appeared as an independent form of knowledge at the university it underwent a crisis of adolescence. What was it? A physical science in quest of uniformities? Or did it belong to humanist studies and could it be subsumed under history? Almost simultaneously with the rise of experimental psychology, new schools of psychiatry were founded, and the unconscious itself was baptized around the 1880s. This date then becomes a convenient starting point for taking a prospect of the modern relationship of history and psychology.

In the German and French schools there were two early significant moves in the direction of fusing these disciplines, the older one under Wilhelm Dilthey, born in 1833, and another under Lucien Febvre, born in 1878. Dilthey's first important writing was published in 1883, and twenty-five years later he was still at work on a critique of historical reason, some fragments of which appeared posthumously after World War I.¹ A professor of philosophy in Berlin, he strongly influenced Troeltsch and Meinecke, Heidegger, and a whole generation of German academic historians of ideas. He even left his mark on Spengler, who would have spurned any identification with him. Lucien Febvre ultimately became a professor at the Collège de France and one of the founders of *Annales*, a journal that was to propagate his ideas. Though both Dilthey and Febvre were dedicated to exploring the relationship of psychology and history, they were virtually unaware of each other's existence, separated as were their intellectual worlds by a generation gap and by the then insuperable barrier of the Rhine. And they meant rather different things by *psychology*. Both, of course, were totally untouched by such outrageous novelties as the doctrines of their contemporary, Sigmund

Freud. As for the historical forays of Freud himself and his immediate disciples, they rarely came within the purview of the academic historians of any country at this period. (Preserved Smith, of Cornell University, was one of the exceptions.) Dilthey and Febvre represent two different versions of an initial stage in the emergence of psychological history in recent times.

Though Dilthey's testament remains unfinished, his essays on the towering figures of western European thought, above all his Schleiermacher and his young Hegel, leave no doubt about his purposes.² He would have had all studies of man absorbed into intellectual history and would have allowed no independent status to either psychology or sociology. Rejecting the feasibility of any connected world history in a traditional sense and scornful of the Rankean state as the primary object of historical knowledge, Dilthey was convinced that the history of man could best be presented as a series of psychological world outlooks, more significantly emotive than rationalist, embodied mainly in the writings of literary, religious, and philosophical geniuses. For all his ambition to seize the essence—in a phenomenological sense—of entire ages and to interrelate economico-social and philosophico-religious trends, he always seemed most comfortable with biographical studies of creative men in whom he saw the various psychic currents of an age crisscross and ultimately assume a manageable structure. His heroic figures are vessels for the dominant passions, cosmic attitudes, and deep-rooted beliefs of a whole epoch. Through the study of the historical varieties of human psychic experience, he found an affirmation of freedom, an emancipation from dogmatism, a humanist deliverance. Though he belittled Nietzsche, it is now easy to recognize that with a far less arresting rhetoric and with none of Nietzsche's moral fervor, Dilthey was developing a parallel conception of monumental world personages the expression of whose spiritual, form-imprinting natures was the stuff of history. Resurrecting and consorting with these overmen was virtually the sole justification for historical knowledge.

Rarely, if ever, did Dilthey descend from the heights of exalted intellectual history sprinkled with affects. In theory he was committed to relating the individual psychological natures of his heroes with the grand world outlooks which they had evolved, to lay before us the fullness of his subject's lived experience. But it is always lived

experience as a closeted Wilhelmine professor of philosophy conceived it. His histories are elitist dramas of the passions of great men's souls. Dilthey studied the manuscripts of his protagonists and provided us with glimpses of their social status, of their intellectual friendships, occasionally of a great love. Their search for God is always apprehended with a deep sympathy and understanding of the intricacies of the Western religious tradition. But nothing below the navel was mentionable. Economic and social reality may penetrate his narrative, but only as part of a world view, and political revolutions are quickly transformed into abstract ideas. Incapable of grappling with total psychic breakdown, when confronted by Hölderlin's madness Dilthey dissolves into utter banality and depicts the dying poet as sitting in Tübingen, his mind "wandering, wandering."³ If this is *Erlebnis*, it is the *Erlebnis* of soap opera. On the other hand, the nuanced description of Schleiermacher's religious experience attains universality. Dilthey was aware of the depths of the unconscious, but for him it was accessible only in the form of an artistic creation.

Dilthey has testified to the impression made upon him by Husserl's phenomenology, and in his turn Heidegger in *Sein und Zeit*, which historicized the categories of cognition, described his view of the historical world as dependent on the philosophical implications of Dilthey's writings. To the extent that pure intellectual biography is still being written and there are still attempts to present *Weltanschauungen* in literary psychological terms, Dilthey endures as a living if limited influence. Karl Jaspers, who began his career as a student of psychiatry as practiced in Germany in the first decade of the twentieth century, untouched by Freud, was less restrictive in his studies of Swedenborg, Hölderlin, Strindberg, and Van Gogh, in which he combined a phenomenological psychology with an attempt to communicate the varieties of world historical outlooks.⁴ His pathographies were even intended to show the neurotic drives of his characters as allies in their creative achievements, an insight which Freudian psychohistorians have sometimes claimed as their unique discovery. But when he sought to encompass the whole psychic universe in his *Psychologie der Weltanschauungen* of 1919, a work that caused quite a stir in its day, his typologizing remained on the same intellectualist plane as Dilthey's.⁵

The French historical tradition since Michelet has been rich in the study of religious and other forms of emotional expression; but it was not until Lucien Febvre that a declaration was made on the centrality of *histoire psychologique*. Febvre summoned his colleagues to devote themselves to histories of *mentalité* and *sensibilité*. I would loosely translate *mentalité* in this context as what was “thinkable” in a human collective at a given moment of time. While the Germans tended to be impressionistic in their psychological portraits, Febvre insisted on great technical, one might say positivistic, rigor.

The heritage he bequeathed is nonetheless problematic. After we have been assured in the opening of his *Luther* that the underlying preoccupation of his study was the relationship between the individual and the mass, between personal initiative and public necessity, we are left dangling. Whether or not one agrees with the conclusions of Erikson’s *Luther*, published as a study in psychohistory thirty years later, it does propose answers to the initial query set by Febvre, whose *histoire psychologique* flatly refused to engage with what he dismissed as the hypothetical Luther of the youthful period:

Let us frankly abandon the effort to reconstruct Luther’s early surroundings; their effect on his ideas and sentiments could never be estimated It is better even to hold out against the seductions of the psychoanalysts for whose taste no theory is too facile A Freudian Luther is so easy to imagine that one feels not the least curiosity or wish to prosecute the acquaintance when an investigator undertakes to delineate him. For, in fact, might one not with an equal facility conjure up a Lutheran Freud, and observe how completely the illustrious father of psychoanalysis exemplifies permanent traits of the German national genius, of which Luther in his day was so notable an exponent?⁶

This is the voice of a French nationalist of the twentieth century, relying on a fatuous, *ad hominem* argument against Freud, with whose writings he had only the most casual acquaintance.

Febvre’s *Rabelais* is the work in which his particular skill in communicating what another epoch “willed, felt, and thought” established the school’s prototype of *histoire psychologique*, its virtues as well as its limitations. When Febvre concentrated upon an interpretation of his subject’s religious beliefs, he was able to demonstrate with a plethora of empirical evidence that Rabelais’s *plaisanteries courantes* and *malices d’Eglise* could be read as proof of

atheism only by committing the historical sin of sins—anachronism.⁷ Febvre moved in ever-extending circles to define the limits of what was thinkable and what could have been experienced in one's relationship to the supernatural in sixteenth-century Europe. Far from a herald of the new rationalism, Rabelais appears as a kind of Erasmian Christian, as do his giants. In passing, Febvre developed a character for the age in standard literary psychological terms, and he proposed the identification of the discrete elements of a collective historical psychology as the historian's primary mission. But the "mental structure" of the age is confined to the conscious level—the manifest content of ideas and beliefs, the style of their expression, where the line was drawn between the natural and the divine, or the intensity in the externalizing of emotion as compared with men of the twentieth century. In the world of the sixteenth he found imprecision, lack of historical awareness, absorption with the senses of smell and hearing rather than sight. This sort of workmanlike history of ideas and sensibility is still practiced in France, both in the literary and in the historical faculties, and is yielding a steady flow of respectable Gargantuan dissertations on subjects like the idea of nature or of happiness in various epochs.

But Febvre pointed out one of the greatest obstacles in the way of any attempt to define the history of sensibility in a segment of past time. In the course of a review of Johan Huizinga's *Waning of the Middle Ages*, he asked skeptically whether in fact it could ever be determined that some periods were characterized by more love, fear, cruelty, or violence than others in their overall feeling tone, and he cautioned against reading into other epochs a psychology derived from contemporary sensibility. How would it be possible, he wondered, to apply psychological models of the comfortable twentieth century to ages that knew endemic famine, awoke and went to sleep with the sun, suffered extremes of heat and cold as a norm. He mocked biographies of pharaohs that were merely portrayals of moderns gotten up in the stage costumes of ancient Egyptians. Cooperative research in which historians and psychologists would be joined—and he referred to French academic psychologists like Dr. Henri Wallon—was the only safeguard he could propose against such follies. But though conscious of the pitfalls, Febvre held to the very end that capturing the unique *sensibilité* of a past age was the ultimate goal of the historian to which all his other efforts were

subordinated. "It is true that to presume to reconstitute the emotive life of a given epoch is a task at once extraordinarily seductive and terrifyingly difficult. But what of it? The historian does not have the right to desert."⁸ Stirring declamation, *de l'époque*.

One of Febvre's disciples, Robert Mandrou, who adheres to the pure tradition, spent years in the detailed study of the judicial aspects of witchcraft in seventeenth-century France and has recently produced an exhaustive history to show the transformation in the mentality of the judges of the *Parlement* of Paris that made a belief in witchcraft, still acceptable to so sophisticated an intelligence as Jean Bodin's early in the century, virtually impossible by the end.⁹ This is a classical, multifaceted diagnosis of an important change in the mentality of a ruling group and of the political, social, and scientific forces that effectuated the revolution. Mandrou is a superb craftsman who does not presume to plumb lower depths. His methodology is positivistic and its conclusions hardly to be faulted, except for neglect of the general question—which may be the critical one for a historian with a psychological bent in 1970—of what the change signified on an unconscious psychic level. Recent American studies of white racism, perhaps an analogous phenomenon, which sometimes call themselves psychohistorical and may be pretentious and methodologically sloppy, nevertheless give an inkling of how a historian might explore collective obsessions related to excremental and oedipal fantasies.¹⁰ Such ideas are untouchable in the purist French school of *histoire psychologique*, though there has been a growing intrusion of psychoanalytic concepts in recent issues of *Annales*.

When the elaborate outside scaffolding of Michel Foucault's theoretical model is stripped away, there still remain elements of Febvre's original program in Foucault's brilliant and well-documented definitions of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century concepts of madness and reason, and perhaps even in his attempts, in *Les Mots et les choses*, to grasp the content of mental structures of various epochs.¹¹ His analysis is more intricate and formally constructed, if less readily demonstrable, than Febvre's approach to a historical mentality. Freud, who belatedly made the scene in France after World War II, has forced Foucault's generation to peer into the underground recesses that were still forbidden to the previous one. Though I frequently lose Foucault along the way of his argument, I find his work the most exciting new event in French *histoire psychologique*,

though not as unrelated to the original master of the school as might be imagined.

III

Apart from the continuation of the Dilthey and Febvre traditions, the years between the world wars brought novelty in two important respects. First, a number of brilliant young Frenchmen of the Ecole normale military class of 1905, Raymond Aron and Jean-Paul Sartre among them, in the most daring intellectual adventure since Mme. de Staël's, traveled to faraway Berlin and submitted themselves to the influence of German sociology and the phenomenological philosophy. At about the same time, the advent of Hitler and a Jewish exodus from Central Europe brought to America men of the generation of around 1900 who had in various ways come within the orbit of Freud's doctrines. I refer to thinkers like Herbert Marcuse and Erik Erikson, not to speak of a large contingent of psychoanalysts who made the United States the world center of Freudian thought and practice. Then, in the loose, free-wheeling intellectual atmosphere of the post-World War II period in America, a host of theories was formulated with an intimate though problematic link to Freud. Marcuse tried to amalgamate a philosophical interpretation of Freudian texts—often excerpted ruthlessly without regard to the main body of the work—with a Marxist-Hegelian world view that on the face of it is totally alien to Freud. Erikson, joining forces with Freudian ego psychologists, struck off in a truly new direction of psychological history and in the sixties popularized the term *psychohistory*. And in the same postwar period Sartre attempted a monumental syncretism in which phenomenological philosophy, Marxist dialectical materialism, and, of late, Freudian psychoanalysis—*quelle galère*—are made to lie together in existential unhappiness. His *Critique de la raison dialectique*, now a decade old, does not yet seem to have made a breach in the historical ramparts of either Europe or America.¹² In France a new generation of structuralists writes about him as if he has long since been, as they say, transcended; but the announcement of his demise is premature.

When Freud finally married the unconscious after the long flirtations conducted by other men (the *mot* is his), the ground was laid for

a fundamental innovation in the employment of psychological concepts in history, though, as I have indicated, virtually no historian was aware of it at the time. The therapeutic technique devised by Freud resulted in the accumulation of literally hundreds of thousands of personal histories. Perhaps Erik Erikson exaggerated when he once said that in the twentieth century we have learned more about individual human development than in all previous ages put together; but the clinical histories have surely provided us both with new types of data and with a flood of material that are not of the same order as the literary and philosophical reflections of the past. After all, every classical analysis produces about ten million words that in some fashion reveal the inner life of a man. From now on out, human conduct can no longer be explained in terms of plain utilitarian motives, as it was by nineteenth-century writers, and even Augustinian churchmen are today willing to complicate the war of the two cities by adopting tactical suggestions on the ways of the Devil from the great disbeliever.

Freud himself made a number of applications of psychoanalysis to history. Though he retained a certain diffidence, shying away from the interpretation of Descartes's famous dreams, for example,¹³ at times he boldly ventured brief psychobiographical hypotheses about creative men, as in his essays on Leonardo and Dostoevsky, where paintings and novels were used as illustrative documents.¹⁴ In this manner he could support his conceptions with objective materials that were public property and did not require disguise, as did his own self-analysis and the case histories of his patients. Aside from his interpretations of literary documents, he invented for us a macro-historical myth on the origin of civilization; he advanced an extravagant psychological hypothesis about the beginnings of Jewish monotheism (he once called his *Moses and Monotheism* a historical novel¹⁵ and he interspersed his writings with analogies between primitive and neurotic behavior. The identification of phylogeny and ontogeny was axiomatic with Freud. The psychological history of civilized mankind probably did not differ substantively from one period to another. Wars and revolutions, whatever their genesis, could be viewed in general terms as changing opportunities for the manifestation of aggression. From time to time there were massive social outbursts against the excesses of instinctual repression in

civilized society. But history as a whole meant only the recurrent, eternal conflict of Eros and death.

While Freud's historical essays were attacked for errors in detail, his analytic method of gaining access to the unconscious opened a vast new area to historical inquiry. The followers of Freud, in imitation of the master, but often without his reticence, or at least ambivalence, proliferated psychobiographies. In the beginning their efforts were devoted almost exclusively to the pathography of literary figures—an example would be Marie Bonaparte's *Poe*, which enjoyed the imprimatur of the master in a few introductory remarks.¹⁶ The writings of poets and novelists lent themselves to plausible readings as symbolic representations of the inner states of their authors, their deep loves and hates, their longings and terrors. Fictional incidents were analyzed as disguised materials or fantasy wish fulfillment of neurotic drives, all by analogy to the dreamwork of patients. A similar method of symbolic interpretation was extended to painters by Ernst Kris, a psychoanalyst who was trained as an art historian, and to composers by Editha and Richard Sterba.¹⁷ Except for obiter dicta, until very recently it has not been attempted with physical scientists—though some of us may be creeping up on them, casting doubt on the autonomous development of science itself. The effect of all this on historical evidence in the traditional sense is disconcerting and sometimes constrains the more hidebound professionals to avert their eyes from the glass, like the eminent contemporaries of Galileo. Henceforth the plainest affirmations in memoirs, dispatches, letters, and secret confessions may require intricate psychological interpretation in the light of the Freudian model. The unconscious demands a bearing and will not be silenced.

Though some psychoanalytic biographers formulated hypotheses about the nature of creativity as a universal phenomenon, in general their artistic subjects were approached as self-contained little monads sufficient unto themselves. This kind of discrete treatment was superseded, however, when political scientists and historians, trying to explain historical developments on the grand scale, applied Freudian personality theory to world historical actors. An American professor of political science, Harold Lasswell, was one of the first to come up with a formula relating the individual and the collective, something to the effect that the great politician displaces private affects upon public objects.¹⁸ The merit of the political studies has

varied enormously; Woodrow Wilson has received a sophisticated treatment at the hands of Alexander and Juliette George and a vulgar one in William Bullitt's analysis, which Freud may or may not have approved.¹⁹ Despite scandalous instances of overinterpretation, immense new vistas have been opened up on the behavior of the monumental figures of world history; and if one is repelled by the grossness of some analyses, one has only to look back on such pre-Freudian compilations as Augustin Cabanès's *Grands Névropathes, malades immortels* to appreciate the enormous strides that have been taken.²⁰

This, I believe, is the perspective from which to examine the work of Erik Erikson. With Erikson, who has written both programmatic statements and two biographical studies of politico-religious figures, the analytic method applied to history has received its most subtle exemplification.²¹ Yet the basic problem raised by Lucien Febvre remains unresolved. We are obliged to ask, Is the ideal psychological model of human development in eight stages constructed by Erikson universally applicable? Is this not a summary of twentieth-century psychoanalytic experience, whose relevance to other cultures and periods is open to question?

Clearly, in epochs where the composition of the family, its spiritual and economic character, and life expectancy are very different from ours, definitions of the successive crises of life would have to vary. Erikson might say they would need modification. But a historian confronted, for example, with data on Florence 1426–1427 indicating that the average age differential of husband and wife was twenty years and that fathers died early in their children's lives could feel that in this instance the schema would have to undergo drastic alteration.²² A historian may hold with Plato and Aristotle, Locke and Descartes, yes, and Freud and Erikson that the earliest experiences are far and away the most potent (we remember Descartes's analysis of his predilection for cock-eyed girls based on an early fixation). And he will surely welcome Erikson's shift from exclusive emphasis on infancy and the early family romance to a more extensive view of ego development including periods of life that are better documented and hence more accessible to historical treatment. But can he accept without debate the proliferation of later "crises" in the Eriksonian design or Erikson's assignment of weight to each of eight crises? The historian should be warned that the selection of

materials to fill the boxes of the eight stages may make of the schema a self-fulfilling prophecy. I find wholly credible the crises of adolescence and what early nineteenth-century psychiatrists like Philippe Pinel called the male climacteric, for these are vocal, articulate periods whose anguish is attested by cries and confessions. The rest of the eight stations of life appear rather arbitrary; the traditional divisions of the church fathers or Dante's four or Vincent de Beauvais's six may be quite enough. Before I can seriously evaluate the Eriksonian model as a historical tool, I feel that the history of the epigenetic cycle itself, diversified in time and place, needs to be written—and initial soundings in this direction have been made.²³ These reservations aside, however, Erikson's stress upon the total epigenetic cycle, whatever its form, seems to me a permanent acquisition of historical consciousness.

In the two studies of men he calls politico-religious geniuses, Luther and Gandhi, Erikson found a motive drive to heroic action in the need of the sons to outstrip their fathers and compensate for their failures. When he generalizes these conjectures about a small and special sample to all geniuses, he is speaking as a theorist of psychoanalysis, eager to find uniformities, and a historian's judgment must remain suspended. His catalogues of the common characteristics of geniuses—a secret foreboding that a curse lies upon them, a tie to the father which makes open rebellion impossible, a sense of being chosen and carrying a superior destiny, a feeling of weakness and shyness and unworthiness, a precocious conscience in childhood, an early development of ultimate concerns, a brief attempt to cast off the yoke of their fate, and a final settling into the conviction that they have a responsibility for a segment of mankind—is troubling even to a historian who has wandered far from the all-too-commonsensual positivists. As a description of Gandhi's and perhaps Luther's experience, yes; as a historical typology, no.

In his Gandhi, Erikson closely scrutinized the manner in which a group of followers resonated to their hero, identified with him in terms of their own life cycles. The skill and imagination with which he handles their recollected dreams, fantasies, and symbolic acts is unmatched in contemporary psychological history writing. On the other hand, the general relationship between the world historical figure and his age is not advanced much beyond Hegel's lectures. There is no theory of social change in Eriksonian psychology, any

more than in Freud's, except for the assumption that each new generation strives to surpass the older one, to innovate upon its works, risking oedipal ambivalence in the process. Erikson does not offer us any help in comprehending either the tempo or the direction of change beyond the categorical assertion that at certain moments mankind is prepared for epoch-making transformations—an epochal identity vacuum is created, he tells us²⁴—and the hero comes along and sounds the clarion call. Each such moment has its potentialities for new creation and redemption from historical psychic blocks that inhibit a society from embarking on a course for which it is ripe and which it desires in its innermost being. The genius leader first releases himself from psychic bondage or points the way to a release for others which he may not have personally achieved.

There is too much of the sacred drama for me in this model of the historical moment. That the hero responds sharply to forces in his world, that he has antennae in his head giving him prescience, foreknowledge, is metaphoric language that German *Zeitgeist* historians have resorted to for many decades. Though he does not mention him, I cannot help hearing the overtones of Hegel's world-historical person, who incarnates the ongoing history of absolute spirit. I am left unenlightened as to what brought about the historical crisis and unconvinced that the hero's prescience is the force that resolves it. On occasion there is a prophetic quality to Erikson's heralding of the next stage in world history, with its everbroadening area of common identities, that leaves the agnostic behind. The austere and rigorous criteria for "psychohistorical evidence" that he set forth in a theoretical statement are not always observed in practice.²⁵

Deriving from a totally different tradition is Sartre's existentialist amalgam of psychology and history. He has at least one thing in common with Eriksonian psychohistory, and that is a humanist emphasis upon personality in history and the freedom of, shall we say, ego will—though Sartre is now prepared to give greater weight to the fetters of inherited psychological conditioning than he was previously.

Sartre renders existential the legacy of a psychologized Marxist framework, fills in the interstices in the history of socioeconomic development with choices of human wills as he presumes Marx would have done, and subjects the action of these wills to psychological analysis. A general Marxist class determinism is postulated,

but, in addition, he believes that a humanist history can show how it is possible for individuals with a variety of class and psychic identities to sacrifice their lives in common historic actions. He has fleshed out a Marxist historical dialectic based on production relations and class structure with an existential account of how men who in an inert state have a relationship of mere seriality to one another—like people waiting in a queue—come, in a given historical crisis, to assume ties that entail responsibilities of life and death in action. His convoluted argument is less interesting for a historian than the kinds of questions he addresses to his materials. Rereading histories of the French Revolution, the Revolution of 1848, and the Commune, he asks, What really happens when a crowd moves on an objective? What is the nature of the secret psychological commitments and pacts they have made with one another? How in fact does collective historical action come about? Though Sartre's passion for phenomenological totalization will put many of us off, historians may be able to adapt to other times and places his method of extracting the full existential implications of isolated events. In his treatment of individuals, Sartre has created prototypes for the fusion of social and psychological knowledge. The published fragments of his *Flaubert*, a work in progress, are a brilliant synthesis of Marxist and Freudian insights.²⁶

The penetration of the outer social and ideological world into the intimacy of the family and the psychological history of the individual in this primary field of confrontation are for Sartre the first and perhaps most significant of a whole sequence of developments. In the introduction to his *Critique de la raison dialectique*, he criticized his Marxist friends for concerning themselves solely with adults:

Reading them one would believe that we are born at the age when we earn our first wages Existentialism, on the contrary, believes that it can integrate the psychoanalytic method which discovers the point of insertion for man and his class—that is, the particular family—as a mediation between the universal class and the individual.²⁷

I have considerable sympathy for this viewpoint. At the present time writers who call themselves psychohistorians are forced to use, *faute de mieux*, crude and misleading affirmations about both the economy and the interpsychic relationships of the Western family. A measure of our poverty is the frequency with which Philippe Ariès's history of childhood is cited as Holy Writ.²⁸ Whenever I have tried to interpret

the family relations of historical figures I have felt on shaky ground in relying on old hat, impressionistic utterances about this nuclear institution. But the possibilities for research are open and the materials cry for exploitation. There seems to be a consensus among social historians, prosopographers, and historians with an interest in psychological phenomena that the history of the family represents a gaping lacuna in our knowledge to which a new generation of historians should give significant priority.

History can now be individuated and particularized in a way that Leopold von Ranke never dreamed of. The economic and social existence of individuals and aggregates today can be seen reflected in the family alongside the psychic pattern set by this primal reality at a crucial period in life. The insights of Marx and of Freud can thus be brought together not in the sibylline macrohistorical rhetoric of Herbert Marcuse or Norman Brown but in concrete historical works where life situations are depicted.

IV

A certain imperialistic character attaches to a major intellectual discovery such as psychoanalysis. When a new instrument for the study of man is developed, believers in its potency tend to conceive of it as a panacea, a solution to a wide range of problems, ultimately including the historical. If it is a successful and persuasive technique that wins assent in one area of the study of man, why should it not be introduced elsewhere? Proclamations are issued raising high hopes and staking out large claims. The new technique is often applied with a heavy hand. Revolutionary results are awaited, as it pretends to answer questions for which there already exist explanations more elegant and plausible or more nuanced. It becomes totalitarian. Under attack, the proponents of the new technique may withdraw from their most advanced outposts: their position was misunderstood, their theory was not meant to be all embracing. It is only the most important interpretive device and does not quite account for everything. The original formulation has been misrepresented, misconstrued.

The initial negative reaction of official historians—and there is such a body of academic mandarins in every country—to a new method like psychoanalysis in history is equally fervid. The new

technique is based on a series of false assumptions; it is not acceptable even in its own discipline; depending upon it is leaning upon a weak reed. Psychology and history are declared to be different in their essence—as if either of them had an “essence” that enjoys even a partial consensus. The human phenomena that psychological analyses are presumed to illuminate are too elusive, or if they can be grasped they are insignificant and irrelevant as far as the true vocation of the historian is concerned. The evidence brought forth by these techniques is obfuscatory, raising more problems than it resolves—as if the opening up of new problems were not in itself a virtue instead of a fault.

As studies multiply—good, bad, and indifferent—the proponents cite the best as examples and the opponents the most ill-conceived and outlandish specimens. With time, however, both extreme positions are eroded. The imperialists of the new technique pull in their horns, and the absolute deniers of its usefulness permit it a humble place in the republic of knowledge. Eventually the new perceptions insinuate themselves into the most normative orthodox history writing, often without the author’s awareness, and the controversy joins the ranks of those “appearance problems” that at intervals have shaken the intellectual world and that one later reads about with some incredulity. This has been the historical fortune of Marxist conceptions and seems a fair prognosis of what will happen to Freudian ideas in the process of their assimilation by historians.

Despite serious misgivings about some of the uses of psychology in history, I feel we have come a long way from the intellectualist psychological history of the earlier part of the century. I still cast my lot with the Freudian “psychologizers.” A historian can scarcely compose a narrative line without committing himself, implicitly or explicitly, to some theory of personality and motivation. In various periods since the late seventeenth century there have been dominant psychologies, like those of Locke and Descartes, that seeped into the literary language as well as into everyday speech, and through these media constrained the historian to employ their motivational terminology. Today a historian must feel at least some uneasiness about adhering to the traditional nineteenth-century patterns of motivation. A skeptic may rightly be uncertain that the more novel systems are intrinsically superior or truer in an absolute sense than those handed down by the past; but it is eccentric in 1970 to go about in satin knee

breeches or wear a Prince Albert frock coat, even if one likes the style. The historian is probably always obliged to accept and express himself in the psychological language of his times; and thus, as I see it, there is no escape from Freud's conceptions in some form, orthodox or heterodox.

Although there may have been a general appreciation of the long interdependency of history and psychology in a wide variety of shapes and forms, on both a theoretical and a practicing level, most members of the American historical profession, positivists and relativists alike, were nevertheless ill prepared for the bombshell that fell into their midst on December 29, 1957, when William Langer in his presidential address before the American Historical Association in New York announced that the historian's next assignment was an application of the findings of psychoanalysis to history. There were visible stirrings among members of the audience that a behavioral scientist of any school would have identified as consternation. This was the most unkindest cut of all, from a scholar who had produced an impressive array of impeccably solid works of diplomatic history. Since then, there are indications that the stubborn resistance of a phalanx of historians generally suspicious of what they considered random psychological associations is being overcome. Papers dealing with psychology and history, presented at a number of recent meetings of the American Historical Association, have attracted large audiences. In 1963 Bruce Mazlish assembled an impressive group of theoretical statements on psychoanalysis and history, and urged the historian to acquaint himself with the relevant texts.²⁹ Stuart Hughes reiterated the general sense of Langer's manifesto and added a programmatic statement of his own in *History as Art and as Science* (1964), where he called for historical research into the "shared anxieties and aspirations [of various epochs] which may be all the more decisive for being only partially conscious." Experiences such as these, he maintains, cut across the conventional delimitations of class or elite groups, and he has voiced confidence in the feasibility of arriving at valid historical generalizations about "deep-seated fears and ideal strivings."³⁰ While it is probable that the American historical profession has produced in the last decade more articles about the desirability of establishing a bridge between history and psychology than works animated by the new ideas, that there has been far more talk about the subject than actual performance, some younger

historians are beginning to incorporate the findings of the new psychology into the body of their work. For example, the June 1970 issue of the *American Historical Review* contained an article by a young historian, John Demos—"Underlying Themes in the Witchcraft of Seventeenth-Century New England"—that was informed by psychoanalytic concepts judiciously introduced.³¹ In this respect, however, American historians have lagged behind the political scientists, who have more eagerly embraced the new ideas in their studies of dominant contemporary political figures—witness the *Dædalus* issue "Philosophers and Kings" (Summer 1968).

The collaborators of the French *Annales*, which has lately shown itself hospitable to articles on psychoanalysis and history, are beginning to explore the psychological aspects of demography, of which they are today the outstanding school in the world. The Russians for Marxist ideological reasons and the official English historians for traditionalist ones are likely to hold out longest against the new trend.

Any contemporary use of psychology in history must postulate the existence of the unconscious, a belief that the unconscious of past epochs has left behind visible traces, and a conviction that these traces are decipherable. About the interpretation of the documentary vestiges of psychic experience there will inevitably be controversy, as there has been over the reading of dead and forgotten languages, and at present the historian is faced with rival and contradictory theories of human development from among which he must choose an initial hypothesis if he is to avail himself of the new techniques. The lack of consensus among psychologists and psychoanalysts is bound to perplex him. Once even a tentative commitment is made, however, to some psychoanalytic theory—and the historian may permit himself the luxury of being eclectic and pluralist—the results can vastly enrich our understanding of historical experience. The investigation of psychological phenomena in past epochs not only will alter historical conceptions about other ages, but could lead to an appreciation of the historical dimensions and limitations of present-day psychological doctrines.

Accusations of dilettantism are commonly made against those who are introducing modern psychology into history, and the problem of professional training in two disciplines, psychology and history, is admittedly nettlesome. Yet is it not precisely at the crossroads of two forms of knowledge that the most fertile conceptions in present-day

historiography are emerging? The idea of an *équipe*, of the teaming of a psychologist and a historian, is too facile a solution; an ultimate synthesis must take place within the mind of the historian if the work is to have a wholeness.

On the use of a specialized vocabulary and the borrowing of technical terminology, as contrasted with concepts, my position is rather conservative. I find the psychological jargon, with infrequent exceptions, too ugly for narrative history and am convinced that one can adopt the concepts without the nomenclature, which derives from a parochial scientific tradition. After all, no therapist worth his salt will resort in his consultation room to technical terms because of the obvious danger that they may be confused with common and vulgar usage. If the historian eschews technical words, he is less likely to be seduced into dogmatism. His explanations of historical phenomena can be ambiguous, multifaceted, possible, or probable; he can write suggestively, propose solutions by indirection. Psychological labels are unnecessarily restrictive; historical figures are not patients admitted to a hospital who have to be categorized for housekeeping convenience.

Acceptance of psychoanalytic concepts in history writing presupposes, of course, a somewhat different set of criteria for historical proof than those to which traditional historians are accustomed. For some, the evidence is not concrete enough, and the element of conjecture more obtrusive than they can countenance. While the quantitative school of history continues the Galilean tradition of mathematicizing knowledge with the instruments of a new technology congenial to our age, psychology in history still has a tendency toward the sample of one and the search for uniqueness. Any prospect of quantification seems remote, though not entirely to be excluded as an element in analyses of the behavior of groups.³²

On the whole I feel that psychological knowledge is at this stage more useful in description than in explanatory system making. When two disciplines are locked into the same cage, the historical keepers tell me, cannibalistic tendencies well up from their unconscious and they sometimes try to devour each other. Recent attempts to merge psychology and history in a clumsily labeled psychohistorical process do presume the sort of grand monist thesis to which history has always been refractory. Since so many historico-psychological problems have not been mapped even in a crude manner, I am reluctant

to embrace elaborate theoretical structures. In the end I conceive of psychology as playing a more modest role, adding a set of vivid psychedelic colors to the historian's palette, offsetting the mournful black and white of structure and number that in this technological age will inevitably suffuse a large part of the historical.

The new psychologies can open up whole areas of inquiry by encouraging the historian to ask some direct, perhaps impertinent questions. The restriction of the method to biography, where it has enjoyed at least partial acceptance, should not be a lasting confinement. Historians will have to wrestle anew with symbolic representation on a broad scale. There are central problems in the history of ideas that cannot be treated adequately on an intellectualist and conscious level of expression alone and that invite the use of new psychological tools: the history of feelings about time, space, utopia, myth, love, death, God. The "unconscious mental habits" that Arthur Lovejoy hoped to analyze in his history of ideas had little or nothing to do with Freud's unconscious. Perhaps the fundamental shortcoming of his work and that of the Febvre school was their exclusive intellectualism. We all know that the experience of love and death and aggression has changed through the centuries. If a professor dared to propose a course on the history of love, he would certainly take a ribbing from his colleagues. Yet this emotion has been as protean in its forms and as vital to human existence as, let us say, shipping or banking, whose respectability as subjects for historical treatment in university teaching is quite unchallenged. When a psychologist investigating contemporary attitudes toward death looks for historical comparisons, we can only provide him with impressions and isolated, sparse instances. Particularly dramatic intrusions of death, such as great plagues, have been studied by historians in their psychological as well as their economic, political, and artistic consequences; Millard Meiss's study of the Black Death is a prototype.³³ But there is need for an exploration of the long-term, changing meaning of death on the unconscious as well as on the conscious level. Death in the eighteenth century had its special character, but I think we know far less about it than we do about the diplomatic relations between Parma and Venice in that period.

The particular forms of psychic repression have a history and so do the forms of sublimation—their instrumentalities differ widely in time and place. The overt manifestations of neuroses have changed,

as any sampling of case histories over the past seventy years will show. As far back as 1913 Karl Jaspers, in a section of his *General Psychopathology* entitled "Social and Historical Aspects of the Psychoses and the Personality-Disorders," recognized that "the neuroses in particular have a contemporary style."³⁴ Few historians have yet coped with the intricacies of presenting to their readers the varying patterns of libidinal satisfaction in different epochs. You can read that grand masterpiece of provincialism, the *Cambridge Modern History*, in its newest version, without even suspecting the existence of these transformations.

The histories of fashion, clothes, sexual and marital customs, punishments, style, and a hundred other questions which have traditionally belonged to *la petite histoire* and to the antiquarians need to be explored for their symbolic content. Freud's second most important legacy to a historian may well be the dissolution of a hierarchy of values among historical materials. If all things can become vehicles of expression for feelings and thoughts, then the state document, grand philosophical affirmation, and scientific law may lose some of their prestige to other more intimate records of human experience. The day of Dilthey's elitist psychological history is over. Conversely, classical psychoanalysis, with a dubious future as a therapy, might be reborn as a historical instrumentality. The dead do not ask to be cured, only to be understood.

A great expansion in our comprehension of the past might be effected through the rereading of old or neglected documents with a different apperception. Notebooks and scribbles that seemed destined for the ashheap of history may be rescued and made to live again—as exciting a reconquest of the past as a new archaeology. A great body of dream literature and of fantasies of past ages is unexplored. In Western Europe and in America there are voluminous materials—legal, political, medical, literary—in manuscript and print, to say nothing of representations by the plastic arts, that have not been researched for their psychological meaning. The questions have not been asked, and therefore historians have not been on the *qui vive* for the answers that lie concealed in the texts.

Economic history has become respectable, and who would now demean the history of labor or the history of consumption patterns? I merely advocate adding to them a history of other needs and expressions of living. In defense of his idealist history of spirit as the

definition of human existence, Hegel once wrote with utter contempt of nutritive history. Now that we have, in despite of Hegel, recognized the claims of hands and stomach to a share in human history, let us make ready to welcome the other more secret and hidden parts of man into the temple.

ENDNOTES

An earlier version of this essay was presented as the Rabbi Irving M. Levey Lecture at Princeton University, April 29, 1970.

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Eroticism and Gastrosophy

LONG BEFORE BECOMING A REALITY, the United States was for me an image. This is not strange: from childhood on, Mexicans learn to regard that country as *otherness*. This otherness is at once inseparable from us and yet radically and essentially foreign. In Northern Mexico, the phrase "the other side" is used to speak of the United States. The "other side" is a geographical reality: the border; a historical reality: another civilization, another language, and, above all, another time (the United States is a modern culture, while we are still struggling with our past). It is also a metaphorical otherness, for the United States is the image of everything we are not.¹ It is otherness itself, except that we are doomed to live with that otherness; the other side is the contiguous side. The United States is always present in our midst, even when ignoring or turning its back on us; its shadow falls on the whole continent. It is the shadow of a giant. The image that we hold of that giant does not really differ from the giant of fairy tales, legends, and myths. It is the overgrown simpleton, kind and smiling, plain and generous, a naïve giant unaware of his own strength who could be easily tricked and whose rage could instantly destroy us. Juxtaposed to this image we find that of the astute and obtuse Cyclops. It is a childish and dissolute image: the child-devouring ogre of Perrault and Minsk, Sade's ogre, in whose orgies libertines used scorched bodies as chairs and tables

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while eating steaming hot platters of human flesh. Saint Christopher and Polyphemus. Also Prometheus, for the image includes the fires of industry and war. It holds the two faces of progress: the automobile and the bomb.

The United States represents the denial of what we were in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries; of what we could not be in the nineteenth, and of what many among us wished we were in the twentieth. Just like any other country, Mexico has been born many times. The first time was in the sixteenth century, right after the Conquest; the second took place at the beginning of the nineteenth century with Independence. The United States appears on our history during the period of our second birth. It appears not as a strange power which must be fought but rather as a model which should be imitated. It was the beginning of a certain fascination which may have changed its appearance during the last 150 years but has not decreased in intensity. Contrary to the North American Independence, ours was a denial. In cutting their ties with England, the North Americans did not cut themselves off from their past; on the contrary, they affirmed what they had been and what they wanted to be. Mexican Independence was instead the denial of what we had been since the sixteenth century; it was not the restoration of a national plan but the adoption of a universal ideology in every way foreign to our past. Among Puritanism, Democracy, and Capitalism there was no opposition but only affinity. The past and the future of the United States are reflected in these words without any contradiction. Between the Catholic world of Mexican Colonial days—which was a mosaic of pre-Columbian and baroque remnants—and the Liberal Republican ideology there was a break: Mexico denied its past. As with any denial, ours contained also an affirmation: that of a future, except that we did not elaborate our own idea of the future but instead appropriated the future of the Europeans and the North Americans. From the sixteenth century on, our history—a fragment of Spain's history—had been an impassioned denial of the newly born Modernity—the Reformation, the Enlightenment, and all the rest. With the beginning of the nineteenth century we decided that we

wanted to be what the United States was beginning to be: a modern nation.

THE INDISCREET MIRROR

It was a false start: Independence liberated us from Spain, not from our past. To the inherited evils we added some that were peculiarly our own. As our dreams of modernization began to fade away, our fascination with the United States grew, and the war of aggression in 1847 converted it into an obsession. It was an ambivalent fascination: the titan had become the enemy of our identity and the secret model of what we wanted to be. Besides being a determining reality in our history, the United States also was a political and social idea. This duality—that is to say, the constant oscillation between two extremes—was stretched all along the nineteenth century and became one of the major topics of the running polemic between conservatives and liberals. The liberals were enemies of the Mexican past, which they denounced as a foreign imposition and a Spanish intrusion. That is why they spoke about Mexico's "recovery" of its independence, as if the nation had existed before the arrival of the Spaniards. To the unauthentic past of Colonial days they did not oppose the pre-Columbian past—forever lost—but the future of a liberal democracy. Faced with two eccentricities—the Indian and the Spanish past (from the point of view of modern Western culture)—the liberals postulated an abstract universality, composed of the progressive ideologies of the period. The United States was thought to be the closest example of that universality: in its present we could see the reflection of our future. The indiscreet mirror: every time that we asked about our image (as in the case of the stepmother in the fairy tale), it pointed to that of the *other*.

The conservatives thought that the United States, far from being a model, was a menace to our sovereignty and our identity. The ideological contamination did not seem to them any less dangerous than the physical aggression; rather, it was a complementary form of penetration. If the future the liberals offered was a form of alienation, the defense of our present demanded—because of the same complementary reason—the defense of our past. Was our past the one the conservatives envisioned, or was it a Spanish edifice built with the stones of the Indian ruins? The problematic nature of that past

became obvious with the Maximilian episode: the conservatives called on a European prince in order to establish a Latin empire that would be able to contain the expansion of the Yanqui republic. It meant the Europeanization of our historical dilemma. That is why the conservatives failed. Amidst the struggle between past and future, both foreign, the future won. During the second half of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century our social, political, and economic model oscillated between the French and the North American. The influence of the former was dominant in our intellectual, aesthetic, and juridical formation. The latter shaped our political institutions and our economic views and ideas.

The change in ideology that followed Independence failed to forge any change in the social structure. The ideas changed but not property ownership or the class system, nor did any of the other characteristics of the traditional society change. Mexico continued to be what it had been, but it no longer believed in what it was. The old values came crumbling down, but not the old realities. Soon the new progressive and liberal values concealed the old realities. Masked realities gave way to the beginning of unauthenticity and lying: the endemic evils of Latin American society. At the beginning of this century we were already fully settled into the middle of our pseudo-modernity: railroads and feudalism, democratic constitutions harboring *caudillos* of the best Hispano-Arabic tradition, positivist philosophers and pre-Columbian *caciques*, symbolist poetry and rampant illiteracy. The adoption of the American model contributed to the disintegration of traditional values; the economic and political action of North American imperialism strengthened the archaic sociopolitical structure. This contradiction revealed that the ambivalence of the giant was not imaginary but real: Edison's country was also Teddy Roosevelt-Nabuchodonsor.

The Mexican Revolution was an attempt to recover our past and elaborate a national vision that would not be a denial of what we had been. If one thinks about Mexico's history and about the number and complexity of our problems, what the governmental heirs to the revolution have accomplished is a *great deal*, but that great deal is *little* if one thinks about what remains to be done. Perhaps our revolution broke out at the wrong time: it was already late within the context of world history for a project of that nature to come to

fruition. The Mexican Revolution was captured by a political bureaucracy—not unlike those of Eastern Europe—and by a capitalist class cast in the image and likeness of North American capitalism, on which it was dependent. It became the worst of both worlds.

For a Mexican to travel in the United States is to penetrate inside the castle of the giant and survey his horror and wonder chambers. While the ogre's castle surprises us by its archaic nature, the United States amazes us by its novelty. Our present is always somewhat behind the real present, while the present of the United States is always somewhat ahead. It is a present in which the future is already written. Our world is still tied to the past. I am being misleading in using the singular to speak of our past: rather, they are many, they are all alive, and they continuously fight within us. Aztecs, Mayans, Otomis, Castellians, Moors, Phoenicians, Gallicians—a suffocating tangle of roots. How can one coexist with them without becoming their prisoner? We ask ourselves this question incessantly, and we have not as yet formulated a definitive answer. We have not learned how to relate to our past, perhaps because we have also failed in its critique. The North Americans have precisely the opposite problem: they were born as a sharp critique of the past. That critique was in itself a distinct affirmation of the values of modernity, such as they were established first by the Reformation and later by the Enlightenment. The point is not that North America does not have a past, but rather that its past is light, easily borne, on the way to the future.

The North American tradition entails the conquest of the future. This is why it is the tradition of change while Hispanic tradition entails resistance to change. Spain and its works: lasting monuments and atemporal values. The point is not to get there first, but to remain where one is now. Our pre-Columbian heritage reinforces this tendency: the pyramid is the image of immutability. The opposition between Mexicans and North Americans is crystallized in our differing attitudes toward change. For one is the wind and the other is the rock. I am not speaking now of ideas or philosophies but rather of beliefs and unconscious mental structures: no matter what our ideology—even if it is progressive—we always instinctively refer the present to the past, while the North Americans refer it to the future. Although this paper does not deal with the question of immigrants—the *braceros* and wetbacks—it is important to note a very special characteristic of this group. It could be called their capacity for

inadaptation to North American society. This ability is made up of an insensibility toward the future. The past is alive within them. It is this very past that has preserved the Chicanos, the minority that has probably most successfully preserved its identity.

These few and disperse thoughts may serve as the point of departure for a description of the Mexican point of view: the United States is the *other*, the foreigner who is inseparable from us, always present and always on the *other side*. The United States is the giant and the ogre, the future and change, the image (the reality) that simultaneously denies and stimulates us. I do not know if this point of view is really shared by most Mexicans. I think so. In any event it is mine. I will not insist; my purpose is not to get lost in the labyrinth of Mexican psychology (if indeed there exist national psychologies), but to put forth some commentary on certain aspects of contemporary North American reality. But I thought it useful and honest first to give an idea of Mexican attitudes since they have a bearing on my point of view. Although in what follows there will be an almost complete disappearance of references to Mexico, the point of view will be the same: the United States is the *other* and its present is impregnated with the future. One would even have to add that while we Mexicans have not yet arrived at the Modern Era, the North Americans have already begun a new one which, for lack of a better word, could be called postmodern. A new fascination: the United States is going through a mutation.

EROTICISM AND GASTROSOPHY

The comparisons that I intend to develop demand some justification. If I wanted to examine the present situation in Mexico, I would spontaneously compare it with the past, and think of Moctezuma, the dictator Santa Ana, or President Cárdenas. In the case of the United States, the comparison would include the present, together with some utopian reality. As with most countries Mexico is more the result of circumstance (the Conquest and Colonial Period, especially) than of the will of its citizens. And in this the United States is also an exception inasmuch as the question of will played a crucial role in the birth of the nation. The poet Luis Cernuda used to tell me: "I am doomed to exist as a Spaniard." And a character from Carlos Fuente's novel *La Región más transparente* says: "It was my destiny

to be born here, so what can I do about it!" One could argue that there are North Americans for whom to be North American is to be damned, especially so after Vietnam. It does not matter: from its origins and throughout the period of its formation, the United States represented a choice, an election, and not a fate. The North Americans are the children of a *vision of a society* rather than heirs to a concrete history. The North American Constitution is a covenant drawn up for the founding of a new society, and in that sense it places itself before history. Before and beyond history, for North American society overvalues change and conceives of itself as the will to annex the future. And thus it is not an absurdity to compare the present reality in the United States with other realities or ideas which exist outside history. One could, for example, compare the United States with certain primitive societies, or with those imagined by utopian thought. Cases in point could be the visions of Rousseau or Fourier, a village from neolithic times, or the phalanstery. The village is outside history, like the covenant that founded the United States. The phalanstery is beyond history, in the future, the chosen land for the North Americans.

The similarities between utopian and primitive societies are not based solely on the fact that they reside outside history. Primitive society (or our idea of it) is, to a certain extent, a projection of our desires and dreams and in this manner partakes of the essential character of a utopian society. At the same time, the utopian constructions take their inspiration from the real or imagined traits of arcadian societies. Fourier tells us that the future world of Harmony will be closer to the simplicity and innocence of the barbarians than to the corrupt customs of civilized societies. Our visions of what was (or might have been) and of what will be (or might be) human society have the same function. Besides their greater or lesser likeness to reality, they are paradigms, models. We see, examine, and judge ourselves through them.

Lately, perhaps as part of the phenomenon called the "twilight of the future,"¹ there has been a preference for the patterns of archaic societies; one prefers the village to the metropolis, the artisan to the technocrat, direct democracy to bureaucracy. The future seems to let us down when it does not terrify us. Yet, even if only to confront yesterday's hopes with today's reality, it occurs to me that it would be useful to compare the society that Fourier describes with the changes

that have taken place in the United States relating to the *moeurs* of love: that is, I wish to compare Fourier's society with the changing North American ideas of love and the variety of sexual inclinations and practices. For it is clear that the change affects mostly ideas and attitudes. The actual customs and habits have, of course, changed a great deal less than has been thought to be the case. The difference is to be found not so much in what we do, but in the attitude with which we approach what we do.

Why Fourier? Because a few years ago a French scholar, Simone Debout, discovered and published with an intelligent, learned, and unpedantic prologue the manuscript of *Le Nouveau Monde amoureux*,² an essential text which certain prudish disciples had managed to lose sight of. In Fourier's society, thanks to cooperative organization of work as well as other social and moral reforms—among them the absolute equality between men and women—“abundance reigns and it has become necessary for the general welfare to have an immense variety of pleasures and for each individual to partake passionately in them.” Even though the United States is far from the state of justice and social harmony which Fourier depicts, industry has created an abundance which—without closing one's eyes to its horrors—is unique in history. This material abundance, together with a living tradition of self-criticism and individualism, are the social and historical background on which the erotic rebellion unfolds itself. The analogies between the North American society and the world Fourier envisioned are just as revealing as the differences. Among the analogies we find the material abundance and freedom of love. The latter is total in Harmony and relative in the United States. The major difference lies in that Fourier's society, as its name implies, has reached harmony, an order which, not unlike the celestial one, is ruled by the law of attraction which unites the opposites without suppressing them. In the United States, one finds, openly or covertly, that it is the profit motive, lying, violence, and the other evils of civilization that prevail.

In Harmony sovereignty is divided, according to Fourier, as in all other societies, between Administration and Religion. The first is charged with production and distribution, that is to say with work, if indeed it is possible to distinguish between work and pleasure in the harmonious society. The second is responsible for pleasure. In civilized societies Religion legislates pleasures, especially those having

to do with the table and the bed (Religion is communion and love), but only to repress and deflect them. By denying certain passions and inclinations, Religion transforms them into ferocious obsessions and frenzies. There are no cruel passions: their repression by Morality and Religion inflames us and literally infuriates us. In Harmony, once the morality of civilization is abolished, Religion is no longer oppressive; it liberates, exalts, and unites our instincts, without excluding any of them. "My theory is limited to using the passions such as nature creates them without changing anything in them." One would have to add: except the social context. In civilized society passions are evil, they divide mankind, whereas in Harmony they unite humanity. In spite of the fact that the passions unfold completely and are not curbed, they neither break the social cohesion nor are they harmful to individuals. Precisely because he is completely socialized, Fourier's man is completely free. Everything is permitted, but contrary to what happens in Sade's world, thanks to a radical reversal of values, the destructive passions change their sign and become creative ones. Sadism is always practiced on an erotic object and masochism is precisely the tendency in a subject to become an object. In Harmony, ruled by the principle of passionate attraction, they are all subjects.

Religion's jurisdiction is dual: love and taste, communion and banquet, Eroticism and Gastrosophy. Eroticism is the most intense of passions, while Gastronomy is the most extended. Neither the old nor those who are children can practice the first; the second, on the contrary, embraces both childhood and old age. Although both are made up of combinations and connections—bodies and substances—in Love the number of combinations is limited and pleasure tends to climax in an instant (the orgasm), while in Gastrosophy the number of combinations is infinite; pleasure, instead of tending toward concentration, tends to propagate and extend itself through taste and savoring. That is probably why Fourier transforms love into an art, the supreme art, and by the same token transforms gastronomy into a science. The arts fall under Eroticism and the sciences under Gastrosophy: Eroticism, which is a gift of the self, corresponds to virtue; Gastrosophy, which means distribution, is allied to knowledge. Harmony also has its saints and heroes, but they are very different from our own: the saints are those who excel in the art of love; the heroes are the scientists, poets, and artists. In civilized

society making love to old people is an eccentricity or an act of prostitution; in Harmony it is a virtuous act. The exercise of virtue is not a sacrifice; it is the result of abundance. It is not difficult to be generous when nobody suffers from sexual deprivation, for everyone is entitled to a sexual minimum. Besides, the male or female saint of Harmony, upon satisfying the other's desires, gains public recognition and in this way satisfies a passion no less violent than sex itself: ambition or the "cabalist" passion, as Fourier calls it. Whether it be taste or sex, pleasure is no longer the satisfaction of a need. It becomes an experience in which desire simultaneously reveals to us what we are and beckons us to transcend ourselves in order to become the *others*. Harmony is imagination and knowledge, or, as Fourier calls it, virtue and wisdom. From the double perspective of Eroticism and Gastrosophy we can now take a look at North American society.

Traditional North American cooking is a cuisine with no mysteries: simple, spiceless, nutritious food. No tricks: the carrot is the honest carrot, the potato is not ashamed of being a potato, and the steak is a bloody giant. It amounts to a transubstantiation of the democratic virtues of the founding fathers: honest cooking, one dish after another, like the sensible and plain-spoken sentences of a virtuous speech. Like the manners of those at the dinner table, the relations among the different substances and flavors are direct. "Traditional North American cooking"? Interdiction of concealing sauces and garnishes that exalt the eye and confound the taste. The separation among the different ingredients is analogous to the reserve prescribed for sexual, age, and class behavior. In other countries a meal is a communion and not only among the people at the table but among the ingredients themselves; a Yankee meal is saturated with Puritanism, is made up of exclusions. The maniacal preoccupation with the origin and purity of food is the counterpart of racism and discrimination. The North American contradiction—a universalism made up of ethnic, cultural, religious, and sexual exclusions—is reflected in its cooking. In this culinary tradition our cult for the passionate and murky ragouts such as *moles*—green, red, and yellow sauces—would constitute a major scandal. So would our preference for the *huitlacoche*, which is not only a corn disease but also looks black. And what of the parrot-green and ecclesiastical-purple chiles, and the golden and dark blue ears of corn? These colors are as violent

and sharp as the flavors themselves. The North Americans, on the other hand, love tender fresh colors and flavors. A cuisine equivalent to pastel and watercolor painting. It is a cooking that fears spices more than the Devil himself but that wallows in swamps of cream and butter. Orgies of sugar. Extremes: the almost apostolic simplicity and sobriety of lunch together with the suspiciously innocent and pregenital pleasures of ice cream and the milk shake.

The glass of milk goes together with the glass of whiskey. The first affirms the primacy of home and mother. The glass of milk contains a set of dual virtues: it is a healthy food and it returns us to infancy. Fourier hated the family meal, for it seemed to him the very image of the family in civilized society; the daily ceremony of tedium officiated by a tyrannical father and a brutalized mother. What would he have said of the cult of the glass of milk? Whiskey and gin are beverages for the solitary and the introverted. For Fourier, gastrosophy is not only the science of the combinations of foods; it involves those who eat as well. The variety of the meal's delicacies should be matched by an equal variety among the guests. Wines, liqueurs, and alcoholic beverages are the complement of food; their function is to stimulate the relationships that develop around a table. Unlike wine, pulque, champagne, beer, and even vodka, neither whiskey nor gin is a good companion for a meal. They are neither aperitifs nor digestives. They are beverages that accentuate withdrawal and unsociability. In a gastrophic age they would not enjoy very much of a reputation.

North American cooking ignores ambiguity and ambivalence. It is the very opposite of French cooking, which is characterized by shadings, varieties, and modulations of extreme delicacy. A French meal is marked by the transition from one substance to another; from one flavor to another; even a glass of water is a kind of profane Eucharist; it is transubstantiated into an erotic chalice: *Ta lèvre contre le cristal/gorgée a gorgée y compose le souvenir pourpre et vital/de la moins éphémère rose.*³ North American cooking is also the antipode of Mexican and Indian cooking, whose secret is the clashing of flavors. They unite the fresh and the piquant, the salty and the sweet, the acid and the hot, the harsh and the delicate. Desire is the active agent, the secret producer of changes, whether it be the passage from one flavor to another or the contrast among flavors and textures. Desire, both in Gastronomy and Erotica, initiates movement among the substances, the bodies, and the sensations. It is the

force that regulates connections, mixtures, and transmutations. A stable cooking, in which each substance is what it is and in which both variations and contrasts are avoided, is the type of cooking which excludes desire. Pleasure is a concept (a sensation) absent from traditional Yankee cooking. It prefers health to pleasure, the satisfaction of a necessity to the matching of flavors. Two basic values are implied here; one is physical and the other is moral, and both are associated with the idea of the body as an instrument of work. Body and work are both economic and spiritual concepts: production and redemption. We are condemned to work, and food repairs the body after the sorrow of work. It is really a question of *reparation*, in both the physical and moral sense of the word. By means of work the body pays its debt, and by earning its physical sustenance it also earns its spiritual reward. Work redeems us, and the sign of that redemption is food. It is an active sign and an agent that restores bodily and moral health. Because food gives us physical and spiritual health, the exclusion of spices is justified on moral and hygienic grounds, for they are the signs of desire and are also indigestible.

Health is a precondition for two of the body's activities: work and sports. For the first, the body is both a productive and a redemptive agent; for the second, the sign changes: sports are a waste of energy. This is only an apparent contradiction, for the two constitute a system of communicating vessels. Sports are a physical waste, which, contrary to what happens with sexual pleasure, in the end becomes productive: sports become an expense that produces health. Work in turn is a waste of health that produces goods and thus transforms biological life into social, economic, and moral life. There is also another link between work and sports; both take place in the context of rivalry. They both involve competition and emulation. They are forms of the "cabalist" passion that Fourier talks about. In this sense sports are carried out with the same rigor and seriousness as work, and, by the same token, work takes on the gratuitousness and lightheartedness of sports. Playfulness as an aspect of work is one of the North American traits that might have received Fourier's praise, though he would have certainly been terrified by the commercialism of sports. The preeminence of work and sports, activities which in themselves exclude sexual pleasure, is analogous to the exclusion of spices in cooking. If gastronomy and eroticism mean union and the copulation of substances and flavors, of bodies and sensations, it is

obvious that no one of them has been the central concern of North American society. Again, I am talking about ideas and social values, not half-secret realities. In the North American tradition the body is not a source of pleasure but of health and work, both in the moral and the physical sense.

The cult of health appears in the guise of the "ethics of hygiene." I speak of ethics because its prescriptions are not only physiological but moral. It is a tyrannical ethic, for it includes under its domain sexuality, work, sports, and cooking. Again, we are facing a dual concept. Hygiene rules both moral and bodily life. To comply with the precepts of hygiene means not only to obey physiological rules but also ethical principles: sobriety, moderation, and reserve. The morals of separation inspire the hygienic rules in the same manner in which the aesthetics of fusion encourage the combination of Gastronomy and Eroticism. When I lived in India I often witnessed the exaggerated hygienic preoccupations of North Americans. Their horror about the possibilities of contamination seemed boundless. To them anything could be the carrier of germs: food, drink, things, people, the air itself. These kinds of preoccupations are the exact counterpart of the ritual preoccupations of the Brahmins before the danger of contamination by impure castes, objects, and foods. Many would argue that the preoccupations of the North Americans are justified while those of the Brahmins are mere superstition. Everything depends on the point of view: for the Brahmins the germs the North Americans fear are absolutely illusory; the stigmas that contact with strange people and impure substances produce are absolutely real. Those stigmas are visible spots, and no member of his caste would dare touch him until he had celebrated the appropriate and complicated rituals required for purification. The fear of social ostracism is no less intense than the fear of illness. The ritual and hygienic taboos have one element in common, which is the basis of both: purity. That basis is religious even if in the case of hygiene it is concealed by the authority of science. The cult of hygiene exhibits the same principle that inspires certain attitudes toward sports, work, food, sex, and race. The other name for purity is separation.

Hygiene is a social moral that has its basis in science. The unconscious root is religious, but the forms in which it appears and its justification are rational. In North American society, unlike ours, science from the beginning occupied a place of prestige in the system

of beliefs and values. The quarrel between faith and reason never reached the same intensity that it did in the Hispanic world. From their birth the North Americans were modern. For them it is natural to believe in science; for us such a belief implies a denial of our past. The prestige enjoyed by science is so great in the public mind that even political controversy frequently takes the form of a scientific polemic (while in the Soviet Union it takes the form of quarrels centered on Marxist orthodoxy). The racial question and the feminist movement are only two recent examples. Are the intellectual differences between the races and the sexes of genetic or of sociocultural origin? The universality of science (or what passes as science) justifies the elaboration and imposition of collective patterns of normality. This overlapping between science and Puritan morality permits, without recourse to direct coercion, the imposition of rules that condemn all singularities, all exceptions and deviations in a fashion no less categorical and implacable than any religious anathema. Against the excommunication from science there is neither the religious recourse of abjuration nor the judicial recourse of habeas corpus. Even though they wear the mask of science and hygiene, the function of the patterns of normality in the domain of eroticism is no different from the role of "healthy" cooking in relation to gastronomy. Both mean the removal or separation of that which is foreign, different, ambiguous, and impure. One single condemnation for Blacks, Chicanos, sodomites, and spices.

THE INSURRECTION OF SPICES

The preceding remarks tend to paint the image of a world characterized by social conformity. It is not so, for the very Puritanism that watches over tasteless food and that has converted work into a way of salvation is at the root of the movements of criticism and self-criticism that have periodically affected North American society, forcing it to examine itself and to repent. This trait is wholly modern. Baudelaire used to say that progress was not measured by the number of gas lamps in streets, but by the decrease in the number of the signs of original sin. I prefer another index: modernity is not measured by industrial progress, but by the capacity for criticism and self-criticism. It is often said that Latin American countries are not modern because they are not as yet industrialized. Nobody has said that throughout

our history we have demonstrated a singular incapacity for criticism and self-criticism. The same applies to the Russians. Their industrialization was literally paid for with blood, but criticism continues for them to be an exotic object; that is why their modernity is superficial and incomplete. It is true that both the Russian and the Hispanic people are acquainted with irony, with aesthetic criticism and satire. We have Cervantes and Chekhov, but not a Swift, a Voltaire, or a Thoreau. We are still in need of philosophical, social, and political criticism. Neither the Russian nor the Hispanic people experienced the eighteenth century. This lack has been most unfortunate for the Latin American, for criticism not only prepares social change, but in its absence those very same changes become externally determined. Criticism permits us to bear change, to make it part of our inner being and thus to change ourselves. In this the North Americans have been truly admirable. Their historical changes have been social crises, but also crises of conscience and consciousness.

The United States has gone through several crises and is now experiencing one that may prove to be the gravest of its history. In any case, dissension, even when it borders on secession, as in the case of the Blacks and Chicanos, has restored health to the United States. The word *pleasure* was never before part of the dissidents' vocabulary. It is only natural. It is not a word that belongs to the philosophical or moral tradition of the United States. The country was founded under the sign of other words, even opposite words: *duty, expiation, guilt, debt*. These constitute the moral and religious foundations of Puritanism. In conceiving life as a fall and a debt that must be paid to the Creator, the words themselves became the yeast of Capitalism. They can all be translated into social and economic terms: *work, savings, accumulation*. Pleasure represents an expense and is therefore a negation of all such values and beliefs. The fact that the word *pleasure* is today uttered so easily and so aggressively by so many is perhaps a wonder, analogous to the "twilight of the future" and other signs. It may mean that North American society intends to change its course. But the chances for a revolutionary change are remote. This is because, as we all know, both in the United States and in Europe there is no international revolutionary class. The proletariat has shown neither an international frame of mind nor a revolutionary calling. If the revolution is not within sight, at least in the Marxist meaning of the word, a large mutation is indeed visible and

its consequences cannot as yet be anticipated. A mutation in this context means a change in values and attitudes.

The tastes of the North Americans have changed. They have discovered other worlds and are now living in a kind of gastronomic cosmopolitanism. In the large urban centers one finds that the culinary traditions of five continents coexist on a single street. Because of the excellence and variety of their products, the restaurants are virtually rivals to the great museums and libraries. The association is with Alexandria rather than with Babel. Not only do we find a great number of restaurants specializing in the most unusual foods—African ants or Perigord truffles—but it is not at all surprising to find supermarkets offering in their spice and exotic counters such a complete variety of products that even Brillat-Savarin would have been enraptured (he was Fourier's cousin). There is also a profusion of cookbooks and cooking schools and institutes. Television programs on culinary art are more popular than religious programs. The ethnic minorities have contributed to this universalism. Many families still keep the cooking traditions of Odessa, Bilbao, Orvieto, or Madras. However, eclecticism in cooking is no less dangerous than in philosophy or morality. All of that knowledge has perverted native cooking. It used to be humble but honest; now it is ostentatious and fraudulent. And what is worse, eclecticism has inspired many self-styled chefs into inventing hybrid dishes and other *para gustias*. The melting pot is a social ideal, but when applied to cooking it produces abominations. This failure is not really strange: it is more difficult to evolve good cooking than it is to have a great literature, as England's example teaches us.

To the perverse fantasies of well-meaning but untalented cooks, one must add the industrialization of food. That is the real danger. The food industry has been and continues to be the principal agent in the degradation of taste, and it has now become a threat to public health. This is poetic justice: the possibility of collective poisoning is fit punishment for the obsession with the origin and purity of food. Nobody knows what it is they are eating when they open a can or package of processed food. The industry's impudence is as amazing as its impunity. It violates the old food taboos, mixes all substances, uses more than three thousand "additives" and chemical compounds, and sells gold bricks—all this not even in the name of health, but just in the name of gigantic business. The question of the food industry

has social and political ramifications: it is sufficient to think of the millions of starving and undernourished people in the Third World. There are economic implications also; the food industry is a gigantic monopoly controlled by three or four companies. And finally there are hygienic implications, for North Americans are consuming more and more substitutes whose long-range effects on public health are unknown. Foods such as nondairy creamers, filled-milk, synthetic fruit juices, and other wonders of Food Engineering are too vast a topic for the limits of this article, not to speak of my own competence.⁴

My interest is to point out that culinary morality (for in this case we are talking about a morality and not an aesthetic) has suffered a double breach in the United States: first, through the industrialization of food and its harmful consequences; second, through the contemporary cosmopolitanism and eclecticism. Both have undermined the old food taboos. The acceptance of rare sauces, strange condiments, marinades, dressings, and seasonings reveals a change not only in taste but also in values. Pleasure in its more immediate instantaneous form, taste, and smell displaces traditional values. Pleasure is the opposite of work and saving. This change modifies the very idea of time. The now is the time of pleasure; work sacrifices the now for the sake of the future.

The discovery of ambivalence and exception in the realm of eroticism parallels the changes in the use of spices and seasonings in gastronomy. But it is a mistake to speak of discovery here as if eroticism and the body had heretofore been unknown realities. Not at all; the North Americans knew very well the powers of the body, that source of wonder and horror. It was precisely because they knew them that they feared them. The body is a constant presence in Whitman, Melville, and Hawthorne. The United States is a country poor in spices but rich in human beauty. It is also a mistake to think that the relaxation in public morality has increased perversion and deviation. (Assuming a greater objectivity, Fourier calls these *manias*, for *deviation* and *perversion* are words that imply a pattern of normality known to be arbitrary, that vary from culture to culture and epoch to epoch.) No doubt the new morality has caused the fall of many a collective and individual mask. Many who did not even dare self-confess their homosexuality or lesbianism are now more openly confronting their own erotic truth. Similarly, it would be

obtuse to deny that people today enjoy their own bodies more and those of others as well. This is done with greater freedom and without the fear that once prevailed. At the same time it is obvious that sexual practices have not changed and that the erotic rebellion has not altered or modified the art of loving. I do not know if there are more numerous erotic encounters, but I am sure that there are no new ways of copulating. Perhaps people make love more (how could one know?) but the capacity for suffering and enjoyment has not increased or decreased. The body and its passions are not historical categories. It is more difficult to invent a new position than to discover a new planet. In the realm of eroticism and passion, as in the arts, the idea of progress is particularly ludicrous.

The erotic revolts of the past affected almost exclusively the elites of society. The extraordinary erotic freedom of the eighteenth century was a phenomenon limited to the nobility and the high bourgeoisie. Libertine philosophy never filtered down. Neither Laclos nor Restif de la Bretonne was a popular author. The same can be said for "courtly love," which was an erotic ideal and a poetics for aristocrats and for poets and literati. So, this is the first time in Western culture when the masses participate directly in a revolt of this nature. In other civilizations, the erotic movements sometimes had a real popular character: sexual Taoism in China and the Tantrism of India, Nepal, and Tibet. But both Taoism and Tantrism were essentially religious movements, while the present erotic revolt takes place outside the churches and is often violently anti-Christian. I insist that it is anti-Christian and not antireligious. It is, in fact, religious. The religious instinct, as Hume feared and the twentieth century has seemed to confirm, is congenital to mankind. I wonder if the erotic frenzy of our times is not an omen of the coming of future orgiastic cults. Until recently the defense of erotic liberty was argued on the basis of individual civil rights; now the emphasis has shifted to collective and public rights. There is another difference: pleasure is seen as a form of collective participation. The erosion of traditional morals and the decadence of Christian rituals (not to mention the discredit attached to official ceremonies) have made acute the need for communion and collective rituals. Our time suffers from hunger and thirst—for fiestas and rites.

The popular character of the erotic revolt was immediately appreciated by the mass media, by the entertainment and fashion industries. For it is not the churches or the political parties but the great industrial monopolies that have taken control of the powers of fascination that eroticism exerts over men. In the allotment, the advertising industry took the lion's share and left the crumbs to the old pornographic business. Mouth and teeth, belly and breasts, penis and vulva—alternatively sacred or evil symbols of dreams, religions, myths, and art—are all converted into a slogan for this or that product. What began as a liberation has become a business. The same has happened in the realm of gastronomy; the erotic industry is the younger sister of the food industry. In the world of Harmony, erotic freedom coincides with abundance and social freedom. The economic necessities have disappeared and the authority of the State is reduced to the self-administration of each phalanstery. In the twentieth century, both in the United States and in Western Europe, industry appropriates and mutilates the erotic revolt. Private business expropriates Utopia. During its ascendancy Capitalism exploited the body; now it has turned it into an object of advertising. We have gone from prohibition to humiliation.

The North American erotic movement is saturated by morality, pedagogy, good intentions, and progressive politics. All of this, plus its popular and democratic character, make it quite different from the European erotic movements. It also differs from the tradition of the intellectual family, extending from Sade to Georges Bataille, that viewed eroticism as violence and transgression. Compared with the somber visions of Sade and the philosophical pessimism of Bataille, the optimism of the North American rebels is really amazing. It makes it worthwhile to take a closer look at their rebellion. By breaking the structure of Puritan morality, which condemns the lower half of our bodies to a clandestine existence, the erotic rebellion has accomplished something of a strange but undoubtedly moral coloration. It is not a question of knowing something that was hidden, but of *recognizing* it, in the legal sense of the word. This recognition amounts to a consecration of sex as a part of nature. The recognition covers all the exceptions, deviations, and perversions, for they become natural inclinations. There are no longer any exceptions; everything is natural. It means the legitimation of all the forbidden and secret aspects of eroticism, something that would have

shocked Bataille. The rebels affirm that the so-called antinatural passions, the old sins "against nature," are natural and therefore legitimate. Their critics reply that the sins against nature as well as the perversions are truly exceptions, violations of normality: vices and illnesses which must be faced with the psychiatrist's couch, the straitjacket of the insane asylum or jail. These critics must once be reminded that "nature" and "normality" are mere conventions. But the rebels must be told that eroticism is not natural sex but social sex.

The dissident's idea is based on a confusion between the natural and the social, the sexual and the erotic. Sexuality is animal—it is a natural function; eroticism takes place within society. Its essence is imagination, for eroticism is a metaphor for sexuality. There is a line of separation between eroticism and sexuality; it is the word *like* or *as*. Eroticism is an act—a ceremony of transfiguration; men and women are born to make love *as* lions, eagles, doves, or the praying mantis. Neither the lion nor the praying mantis makes love *as* men do. Man sees himself in animals, but they do not see themselves in man. Upon contemplating himself in the mirror of animal sexuality, man changes himself and changes sexuality. Eroticism is an imitation and a representation; it is not raw sex but sex transfigured by imagination: rite, theater. That is why it is inseparable from perversion and deviation; both are its extremes. A natural eroticism, besides being impossible, would mean a return to animal sexuality. It would be the end of Fourier's *manias* and the "penchants" of Sade, but also the end of the most innocent caress, from the bouquet of flowers to the simple kiss. The end of that whole gamut of feelings and sensations which from neolithic times, or maybe even before, have enriched the sensibility and imagination of men and women. It would be the end of love, the great invention of Western culture. The final consequence of the erotic rebellion would be the disappearance of eroticism itself and of what has been its highest and most revolutionary expression: the idea of love. During all of Western history, love has been a secret and subversive power, the great medieval heresy, the dissolvent of bourgeois morality, the impassioned wind that was born with the German Romantics and reached all the way to the Surrealists.

Is a society without prohibitions and repressions possible, viable, or imaginable at least? Here Freud, Sade, and Bataille agree. There is no civilization without repression, and thus the essence of eroticism,

which makes it different from animal sexuality, is its transgressing violence. Fourier would argue that there is transgression because there is prohibition; it is not instinct but repression that has turned man into beast. Even though I cannot help but sympathize with those who struggle against repression, whether it be sexual or political, I do not believe that it is possible to do away with it completely. Sade imagined a society ruled by "strong passions and soft laws," in which the only sacred right would be the right to *jouissance*. Nothing would so much resemble a bullfight or a hunt than such a society. Having said this, I must add that, unlike Bataille, I do not think that the essence of eroticism is transgression. For me eroticism is before and above all a *representation*, something that one cannot find in animal sexuality and that man has invented. Eroticism always implies the desire to *go beyond*, precisely beyond animal sexuality. That is why one of its chords—to see the body as a musical instrument is a metaphor as old as music and eroticism—is transgression. Transgression is but one extreme of the movement that makes us, departing from our own bodies, imagine other bodies, and later search for the embodiment of those imaginings in some real body. Eroticism, precisely because it is an urge to go beyond, is also a search. For what or for whom? For the *other*. The other is our double. A double that denies us. Faced with the other's denial there appears a double possibility: the destruction of the *other* (Sade), or to go beyond still. That beyond holds the other's freedom and my recognition of that freedom. That other extreme of eroticism is the opposite of transgression: the acceptance of the *other*.

The erotic revolt is a protest against Western morality, and especially against Puritanism. That is why it has particularly flourished in the United States and in other Protestant countries like Denmark and Sweden. This protest leads to a political and social demand: the recognition of exception. Through a very curious process sexuality is transformed into ideology. On the one hand, the erotic exception disappears as such and becomes nothing but a natural inclination. On the other hand, it reappears as dissent. Eroticism becomes social and political criticism. The effort to make eroticism moral and legal tends to politicize it. Sex takes on a critical function; it writes manifestos, delivers speeches, and marches in the streets and parks. It is no longer the lower half of the body, the sacred and condemned region of passions, convulsions, emissions, and

rattles. In Sade sex philosophizes, and its syllogisms are an eruption of lava: the logic of eruptions and destruction. Now sex has become the public preacher and its speech is a call to arms: it makes of pleasure a duty. We have an inverted Puritanism. Industry has converted eroticism into a business and politics into ideology.

Many critics have pointed out that Fourier did not anticipate the development of industry and the changes it would introduce in the world. That shortsightedness would be enough to discredit him as a prophet. However, it is not altogether impossible that his lack of vision may have been, on closer look, a more accurate vision of the future. Fourier never hid his dislike for the manufacturing industry, the only one that existed during his lifetime. No doubt his attitude reflects his experience with the wretched mill workers of Lyons, whom he knew intimately. But the reasons for his dislike of industry run deeper. The axis of Harmony's system is *attractive* work. In the phalansteries men and women would work with the same enthusiasm with which they presently play and enjoy their favorite passions. That is why Harmony's tasks are so varied. The butterfly-passion—love for change and variety—is one of the ruling principles of Fourier's system. Damnation does not constitute having to work, but to do always the same work. Now, the principle of pleasure is not easily applied to industrial work, because, as Fourier never tired of saying, it is *intrinsically* monotonous and unattractive work. This explains why the principal activity in Harmony is agriculture. At the same time, Fourier is quite aware of the fact that it is impossible to do away entirely with industry. What to do? His solution is ingenious and it involves applying his cardinal principle: absolute deviation.

In civilized society the rule is the limitless production of the same product. Mass production is based on the idea of maximum consumption and the product's minimum durability. In Harmony we find the rule inverted: an immense variety of products of great durability and minimum consumption. With his usual exaggeration, Fourier tells us that products in Harmony will be practically eternal. In order to avoid the danger of weariness and also to maintain a live passionate attraction, the products would be objects of great beauty and perfection. This is the application of the model of handicraft to industry. The needs of this mode of production would be opposite to those of our factories. There would be no need for an army of workers. A small group of artisan-workers would be occupied in

producing a limited number of objects of extraordinary variety and perfect finish. In this way the tedium and horror of industrial work would be reduced to a minimum. The manufacturing of goods, Fourier concludes triumphantly, would require but a fourth of the working day. In Harmony, "true wealth would be based, first, in the greatest possible consumption of different kinds of foods and, second, in the least possible consumption of different kinds of clothes, furniture, things." Exactly the opposite of what happens in our present society, in which handicrafts have disappeared and cooking is already an industry and thus a part of mass production. Fourier's solution may make us smile. However, it outlines—as in inverted symmetry—the central contradiction in North American society and in the whole developed world—Eastern and Western Europe: the opposition between industry and passional attraction. Industry has brought about abundance, but it has converted Eros into one of its employees.

ENDNOTES

This article was translated from the Spanish by Sara Klaren.

¹Octavio Paz, *Corriente alterna* (México: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1967) and *Conjunciones y disyuntivas* (Mexico: Cuadernos de Joaquín Mortiz, 1969).

²Charles Fourier, *Le Nouveau Monde amoureux*, notes and intro. by Simone Debout-Oleszkiewicz (Paris: Editions anthropos, 1967).

³Stéphane Mallarmé, "Verre d'eau" (1985).

⁴See Judith Van Allen, "Mastering the Art of Gourmet Poisoning, America's Food Industrial Complex," *Ramparts* (May 1972).

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The Search for Acceptable Words

I HAD GRAVE DOUBTS about my fitness to discuss the question of research in the humanities because I have been deflected from everything that could conventionally be described as research, in the sense of reading material that other people have not read or have read for a different purpose. The reason I take an autobiographical line in what follows, even at the risk of sounding egocentric, is that my experiences as a scholar have seemed to me, for a long time, to be atypical and that more recently I have begun to think that they may be more typical than I have suspected.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the system of Ph.D. training was established in American universities, largely, it is said, on a German model. The idea of the Ph.D. was to define the condition that a practicing scholar was supposed to keep himself in. His thesis was there to demonstrate that he had the capacity to make original contributions to scholarship, and the rest of the training was to prepare him to teach over a wider field than his special scholarship covered and to be able to make use of research materials in other languages. Scholarship in the humanities was conceived at that time largely in terms of the division of labor, and the model, implicitly or explicitly, was science. The scholar was by definition a specialist, connected with his community through his teaching. The implication was that the highest reward of the scholar would be relief from teaching duties, at least in the undergraduate school, so that he could devote his time to his speciality. Behind this lay a further assumption

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about the place of the university in the community at large. Because of its innate tendency to build smaller compartments in knowledge, research gives an illusion of withdrawing from social issues; hence a hierarchy of scholarship in which pure research is at the top also assumes a university that constitutes a social counterenvironment.

At this time and later a number of learned journals were established, many of them with the word *philology* in their titles, which indicated that the scholarly organization of literature had been derived from the comparative study of languages. And though the Ph.D. took a much longer time to establish itself in the British universities, especially Oxford, where I studied during the thirties, still Oxford had also adopted the philological conception of literature. There were three courses in the English school at Oxford when I was there: course one, which had the highest rating, featured Gothic and Old Norse; course two covered English literature down to 1500; course three, established for the benefit of Rhodes scholars and the like, covered English literature down to 1830. Whatever the course, the emphasis was on philological elements, rather than on literary or critical ones. On both sides of the Atlantic it has been relatively recently that we have had a sustained body of scholarship in the Old and Middle English periods that is not critically infantile.

The excuse offered for this was that, as any cultivated person ought to be reading literature on his own, giving academic credit for doing so was a weak permissiveness. There are colleges in Oxford which to this day refuse to employ a tutor in English for this reason. It is part of the same perverted ethos that what is regarded as serious in the study of the modern languages is the philological aspect of it. It strengthens the moral fibre to learn the classes of Old English strong verbs; it weakens it to study the rhetorical devices in *Ulysses*. Here again is a lurking analogy to science, and when nineteenth-century philology gave place to twentieth-century linguistics, some of the old prejudices against literature as such revived.

A dissatisfaction with this ethos reached its climax around the forties of the century in America, when a movement described as "new criticism," because it was new to the *Wissenschaft* mentality, raised a question that was almost a moral one. Why should people be regarded as scholars in the area of literature who did not know the first thing about literature? For the first thing about literature to know is how to read a poem as a poem and not as a philological

document. In endeavoring to develop this, the new criticism lost itself in a labyrinth of explication. Many aspects of the reaction, as usually happens in such cases, were carried to absurd lengths. A strong undergraduate feeling developed that departments of English in universities were under a moral obligation to be as contemporary as possible, and a similar feeling expressed itself recently under the neo-Nazi slogan of "relevance." There were also graduate students who would propound the thesis that literary works could be properly read only when they were deprived of all context in language, history, and experience. In the meantime the old philological journals had begun to lose their prestige and were being replaced by new journals, most of them with "review" in their titles, and most of which printed poetry and fiction as well as criticism. For all the excesses, the reaction itself was inevitable and in its main emphasis healthy. After a long period of specialized scholarship concerned with literature which had no real basis in literature, a great body of information about literature had been built up which very seldom led to any increased insight into it. Hence, there had to be a period of drawing things together, of trying to look at literature itself in a broader and more general way.

It seemed to me, entering this situation a generation ago, that the first thing to look for was a basis for critical principles within criticism itself, trying to avoid the kind of externalized determinism in which criticism has to be "based on" something else, carried around in some kind of religious or Marxist or Freudian wheelchair. At that time, scholars who regarded their work as historical assumed that anyone dissatisfied with their methods must be antihistorical. This was the reverse of my own attitude: I was dissatisfied with the methods of historical scholars who did not know any history. That is, who did not know the history of literature. There were many who knew dates and the numbers of the centuries and a certain amount of nonliterary history, but who did not know anything about the actual development of the conventions and genres of literature itself. I think that enough theoretical work has been done now to make visible a shift of emphasis and that we are at the beginning of another phase of scholarship, based more solidly on a properly established critical theory of literature. There may again be some specialization and division of labor, but the old pseudoscientific analogy has had it. I

should be very pleased if I were to become regarded as one of the people who had assisted in the process of transition.

It is true that I have also suggested that criticism may become a scientific activity. But the conception of science involved is different. The older conception rested on a work-and-play antithesis: philology was the one way of working with words, so far as was then known, which seemed to have affinities with scientific procedure. Consequently, philology was work, whereas literature, to which only a purely emotional reaction was thought of as appropriate, escaped every form of systematic and progressive study. I have tried to show, or help show, that literature itself is a structure and can be studied in sequence like anything else; hence, for me the entire study of it can assume a scientific shape. I am thinking, of course, of a future development of science in which the social sciences will have rediscovered the fact that they are equidistant from the humanities and the physical sciences, and are as closely related to the former as to the latter.

The transition, however, leaves many problems unsolved, notably the question of the Ph.D. The humanities resist the division of labor much more actively than the sciences, and the collapse of the scientific analogy in graduate work in the humanities puts this degree in a curiously paradoxical position. In the humanities, things stick together, get involved with one another, and merge into larger configured patterns. Consequently, the graduate student's Ph.D. thesis is almost always going to be his first book. So, obviously, he has to get the thesis done, because if he doesn't, it will block up everything else he might do. It is possible to pick a thesis topic which is a pure academic exercise and can be done in a limited time, but such topics are rare, and many of them are exercises in which the student will learn nothing except the technique of the exercise. Much more frequently, he gets discouraged by the terrible waste of time and effort involved in writing first a dissertation and then a book on the same material.

There are many things in the Ph.D. program which are extremely valuable, as I know to my cost. I avoided the Ph.D. myself by sheer accident, but there were elements in the training which I wish I had got in the regular way and have always felt the lack of. Some efforts have been made to put in additional degrees in place of the Ph.D., with very limited success. To put in a degree that is simply an inferior

degree seems to me entirely useless. A few years ago, some graduate departments at Toronto, including English, experimented with an M.Phil. degree, but soon abandoned it. I am afraid too that they also abandoned most of the students ill-advised enough to take it. The attempt was part of a move to get qualified teachers into classrooms in a hurry during a period of rapid expansion. But periods of rapid expansion in the university never last: depression is the university's normal state, and second-class degrees merely supply a pretext for cutting staff in harder times.

The same thing is true, I should imagine, of degrees regarded as theoretically equivalent to the Ph.D., but with emphasis on teaching rather than research. In the new conception of the university's place in the community which is now emerging, teaching and research cannot be separated even in emphasis. If research is subordinated to teaching, the instructor soon falls behind in his subject, and his teaching suffers accordingly. If teaching is subordinated to research, the instructor, unless he leaves the university and attaches himself to a research institute, loses touch with the social context of his research. I understand that in the University of London a doctoral degree is awarded on the completion of a certain body of work, but is independent of graduate study as such. This seems to me to make very good sense for the humanities. But in general I really have no solution to the doctoral problem in literature and can only offer one or two observations about the nature of the academic area which may be of some use.

I notice that whenever I publish an article and get offprints, I may send the offprints to friends, but I seldom get any requests for them. On the other hand, when I gave an address to a convention of psychiatrists that was printed in a psychiatric journal, I got over a hundred requests for offprints. It was no surprise to me to learn that scientists tend to work with offprints and abstracts, but I had not realized before so strongly how much the humanist tends to wait for the book. It is as though the humanist cannot really understand any aspect of his subject unless he studies a large configuration of it.

The book is a by-product of the art of writing and is the technological instrument that makes democracy a working possibility. The expository treatise, in particular, is a democratic form in which the writer is putting all his cards on the table, avoiding all rhetorical tricks designed to induce hypnosis in an audience, relying

on nothing but the inner force and continuity of his argument. The reader cannot directly reply, but he can always turn back in the book to a previous point and find that the same words are repeated no matter how often they are consulted, a model of patience for the teacher in itself. Behind the book is the larger social context of a body of written documents to which there is public access, the guarantee of the fairness of that internal debate on which democracy rests.

The authority established here goes back to the fateful point in Greek philosophy represented by Socrates. Students of Pythagoras or Heraclitus were expected to be disciples, pondering the dark sayings like "change is a rest," "all things flow," "don't eat beans," and the like, which had the unquestioned authority of a guru or oral teacher. Then we have Socrates approaching the youth of Athens and saying, in effect: "I don't know anything, but I'm looking for something. Come and help me look." Those who responded found themselves pursuing a straight line of dialectic, an argument which had its own authority and autonomy independent of the teacher. Socrates was not a writer, but his linear habit of thought made him an inspiration to writers, beginning with Plato and Xenophon. Socrates was also a philosopher, and philosophy has, up until quite recent times, also been based on the book. The centrifugal drift towards scientific procedures has affected philosophy as well, with, possibly, though I speak with very little authority, the same result. I remember as a student of the subject having to read, for example, Lotze's *Mikrokosmos*. I have totally forgotten what Lotze's philosophical "position" was, or into what ocean of thought the delta of his argument debouched itself. But I do remember feeling that I was reading a wise and humane book, which had got to be that through the relaxed and comprehensive form adopted. The shape of the book, in short, has a great deal to do with the liberality of the discipline that produces it.

I am on a commission in Canada concerned with communications, and when I first joined it I read a policy report which recommended that publications should be issued from time to time. The recommendation began: "Despite the disadvantages inherent in the linear representation of a world that is increasingly simultaneous, print still retains its medieval authority." This sentence is typical of the nitwitted McLuhanism (I am not speaking of McLuhan himself) which is confusing the educational scene. I recently spoke to an audience of university graduates, and was asked, quite seriously,

what I thought of the university's building such a huge library when the book would be out of date by the time it was opened. The book qua book is not linear: we follow a line while we are reading it, but the book itself is a stationary visual focus of a community. It is the electronic media that increase the amount of linear experience, of things seen and heard that are as quickly forgotten. One sees the effects on students: a superficial alertness combined with increased difficulty in preserving the intellectual continuity that is the chief characteristic of education.

I mentioned the fact that scholarship tends to become pluralistic and increasingly specialized, increasingly unintelligible even to its nearest neighbors. The core of truth in the older conception of the scholarly life, which placed pure research at the top of a hierarchy, is that scholarship always holds a potential power of veto over everything else. That is, the tiniest alteration of established fact may have repercussions that will totally change the generally held view of the whole subject. But the scholar remains connected with his community as a teacher, as a public figure, and as a popularizer (in the best sense, naturally) of his own subject. This is the level for which the book is the inevitable form of presentation. Perhaps, as remarked above, we may expect in the humanities a new crop of research articles and special studies which can be produced after new theoretical principles have been established. I gather from talking to scientists that they seem to feel that they are at the other end of the cycle and that all the sciences, even the physical ones, are feeling a greater need for books and for larger and more comprehensive patterns of thought.

The book raises the question of the nature of influence in literature. This is one aspect of literary study that has received a good deal of attention, because its basis appears to be historical. But scholars trained in extraliterary perception, interested in the history of ideas and the like, are apt to think of an influence transmitted from A to B as a large body of consciously held ideas. This is hardly the way that influence exerts itself among poets. One may assume, for example, that Blake, Shelley, Keats, and Wordsworth would all have made an intensive study of Milton. But what they got from Milton they got as poets, and consequently the derivation is a mainly unconscious derivation of phrases, even words, that flow from a single source into four very different contexts. Probably the best way to document the

influence of Milton on these poets is to run their texts through a computer: the result would not, in general, tell us much that we could not already guess, but the documentation would be useful.

The computer has made, or can make, other changes in the structure of literary study. A hundred years ago, even fifty years ago, there was a strong existential reason for emphasizing values in the study of literature. It was one thing to decide to commit a large part of your life to making a concordance to Shakespeare or to collating manuscript variants of Chaucer, but would you want to do that kind of work for medieval homilies, or for the kind of poetic achievement represented by Googe or Churchyard? The computer has not only altered the answer to the question, but has helped to erode the fallacy of hierarchical values behind it. When Professor Douglas Bush produced his book on classical mythology in the Renaissance a generation ago, he tells us that he had made an immense number of observations about the treatment of some Ovidian myths in minor Elizabethan poets. He regarded this work as largely a waste of time, and remarked that even though he knew more than anyone else about such subjects he should keep his information to himself. I suspect that this information was not really too trivial to be passed on, but I think it may indicate an area where some kind of mechanical aid might be of assistance. Whatever was highly regarded in its day, such as the Pyramus and Thisbe legend, is of great importance merely for that reason, whatever a contemporary scholar may think of it.

But there is another type of influence that it is impossible to trace except by an occasional accident. Every creative person has an interconnected body of images and ideas underneath his consciousness which it is his creative work to fish up in bits and pieces. Sometimes a phrase or a word comes to him as a kind of hook or bait with which to catch something that he knows is down there. Reading Yeats, one would think that he owed a large-scale debt to the writings of Villiers de l'Isle Adam, and to *Axël* in particular, which would be a ready-made subject for the scholar to explicate. On examination, we find that Yeats had been fascinated by a single phrase, "As for living, our servants will do that for us," extracted, totally out of its context, from a play he could hardly understand in the original French, and applied in contexts even more remote. Poets are full of influences of this kind, vagrant seeds blown toward a responsive soil, and not only poets.

When one reads the studies of influence made on creative people by their teachers, by factors in their early environment, by their reading, one is usually struck by the great plausibility of these constructs: one does, in fact, become what one is through influences. At the same time we should remember that it almost certainly did not happen like this at all. Anyone reading *Finnegans Wake* thinks he can see at a glance that *Alice Through the Looking-Glass* was a major formative influence on it, especially the figure of Humpty Dumpty and his portmanteau words. Yet we learn that Joyce had not in fact known what was in that book until it was called to his attention by others. Again, one can see that of all writers in the past, the one closest to Joyce in both temperament and technique is Rabelais, and one could study the parallels between them exhaustively. Yet Joyce says that he had not read Rabelais, though he expects nobody to believe him.

Even in my own work I can occasionally trace the same process of transmission by seed. When I began teaching, the University of Toronto possessed an honor course in English language and literature (now destroyed, in a fit of hysterical exuberance, because it was said to be "elitist"), which was spread over four colleges, each of which had its own department. This meant that I not only had to teach Milton, but teach Milton opposite Professors A. S. P. Woodhouse and A. E. Barker, two of the best Milton scholars anywhere, who were teaching it in the other colleges. One result of this was that for several years I confined my reading to primary sources, there being no time to read secondary ones. Later on, when the pressure slackened a bit, I attempted to adopt the normal routine of checking through learned journals. I soon cut down on that activity, not because I regarded the articles as useless, but for the opposite reason: I was interested in everything, everything seemed to have some relevance to my interests, and yet the pursuit of knowledge in all directions at once was impracticable. Ever since then, I have realized that scholarship is as much a matter of knowing what not to read as of knowing what to read. While writing *Anatomy of Criticism* in particular, endless tantalizing vistas opened up on all sides, yet I had to close my eyes to them, as Ulysses closed his ears to the sirens, because exploring them would get my main thesis out of proportion.

Fortunately, one of my colleagues when I began teaching was Professor Wilson Knight, later of Leeds. I think Wilson Knight influenced me more than I realized at the time. At that time he was

completely possessed by Shakespeare and gave the impression of not knowing a quarto from a folio text, certainly of caring even less. He showed me once his main instrument of scholarship—a Globe Shakespeare with a mass of penciled annotations. Like most students of my generation, Knight's books had much the effect on me that Chapman's Homer had on Keats, and the method indicated, of concentrating on the author's text but recreating it by studying the structure of imagery and metaphor, seemed to me then, and seems to me still, the sort of thing that criticism is centrally about.

Nevertheless, I went through a long period in which every publication of mine was followed by neurotic fears of being confronted with proof of having plagiarized it from some source I had not read—or, worse still, had forgotten having read. I gradually became more fatalistic about this, besides realizing that the more obvious what I said seemed to me, the less likely it was that anyone had said it before. I can also trace one or two examples of influence so trivial that I hesitate to record them except as evidence that the kind of influence I postulate for Joyce and Yeats works on all levels of intellectual activity. Once, when an undergraduate, I was discussing the keyboard music of Bach with a friend interested in the same subject and spoke of my great interest in the fugues Bach had made on themes by Albinoni. My friend made some such comment as "very scholarly," and the word *scholarly* as applied to Bach's music stuck in my mind. I had always known that it was scholarly, of course, but to know a thing is not to realize it: one may know many things that are still not attached to that submarine body of ideas one is trying to fish up. Forty-odd years later, I wrote an essay on Shakespearean comedy trying to show that Shakespeare is as scholarly a writer as Ben Jonson, except that his scholarship, being connected with the oral tradition, is harder to recognize as such. The analogies with Bach's music are there also, so that here is one example of a seed that I have accidentally caught in the act of germinating.

To carry this point a step further: my first big project was a book on the interpretation of William Blake's longer and more didactic poems, generally called "Prophecies." There were many reasons for getting interested in Blake: perhaps one may be of general interest. I am, in cultural background, what is known as a WASP and thus belong to the only group in society which it is entirely safe to ridicule. I expected that a good deal of contemporary literature would be

devoted to attacking the alleged complacency of the values and standards I had been brought up in, and was not greatly disturbed when it did. But with the rise of Hitler in Germany, the agony of the Spanish Civil War, and the massacres and deportations of Stalinism, things began to get more serious. For Eliot to announce that he was classical in literature, royalist in politics, and Anglo-Catholic in religion was all part of the game. But the feeling of personal outrage and betrayal that I felt when I opened *After Strange Gods* was something else again. And when Eliot was accompanied by Pound's admiration for Mussolini, Yeats's flirtations with the most irresponsible of the Irish leaders, Wyndham Lewis's interest in Hitler, and the callow Marxism of younger writers, I felt that I could hardly get interested in any poet who was not closer to being the opposite in all respects to what Eliot thought he was. Or, if that was too specific, at least a poet who, even if dead, was still fighting for something that was alive.

When I began work on Blake, around 1933, there was one serious book available on the subject of the symbolism of the "Prophecies," Foster Danion's book, which had appeared in 1924. Apart from this, there had been hundreds of books, articles, and essays on Blake, to say nothing of thousands of incidental references. There was nothing in any of this material, so far as I know, and I know more about it than most people, which was of the slightest use to me. No device of "information retrieval" would be of any help: the important thing was to get rid of the alleged information, not to get hold of it. And yet, many years later, I was asked to write a bibliographical essay on Blake which was in fact a history of Blake criticism. For it, I had to go over this material again, and I discovered, to my great surprise, that it was a most fascinating and rewarding exercise. The books still told me nothing about Blake, but they told me a great deal about the history of taste in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. More generally, they told me a great deal about the human ability to stare at what is straight in front of one's eyes and not be able to focus one's eyes on it. I know now much that I could hardly have learned in any other way about the anxieties and obsessions which prevent a great writer from being properly estimated in his day and for some time after. I note from a reprint catalogue that four of these early books have recently been reissued. As far as telling us anything about Blake is concerned, all these books are trash, and one of them would be a

strong contender in the admittedly stiff competition for the title of the world's worst book on Blake. But in a sense, you can't lose in the humanities: if your book is any good, it's a contribution to scholarship; if it's no good, it's a document in the history of taste.

Two morals seem to me to be relevant. First, it is a part of the fallacy of the scientific analogy that, before deciding on a thesis topic, one should look to see whether or not "it's already been done." Of course this did not apply to my Blake project. But in general, in literary criticism, nothing can ever be done in a definitive way, except very specific projects, such as editing texts. I have supervised a good many doctoral theses on Joyce, Yeats, Stevens, and other much-processed writers, and have been well aware that all these theses were saying very similar things. But each represented an individual point of view, and this kind of individuality has to be taken account of in the humanities when we speak of a contribution to knowledge. In this situation the "review of recent scholarship" article emerges as an indispensable scholarly tool.

Second, a principle which follows from the first, the question of personal authority is relevant to the humanities in general, and literary criticism in particular. I think it advisable for every critic proposing to devote his life to literary scholarship to pick a major writer of literature as a kind of spiritual preceptor for himself, whatever the subject of his thesis. I am not speaking, of course, of any sort of moral model, but it seems to me that growing up inside a mind so large that one has no sense of claustrophobia within it is an irreplaceable experience in humane studies. Some kind of transmission by seed goes on here too. I am venturing on an area which so far as I know has been very little discussed, and what I say is bound to be tentative. Keats remarks that the life of a man of genius is a continuous allegory, which I take to mean, among other things, that a creative life has something to do with choosing a life-style. I think the scholarly life has something to do with this too, and one chooses a preceptor among the poets who has something congenial to oneself in this respect. I notice that, at the age of sixty, I have unconsciously arranged my life so that nothing has ever happened to me, and no biographer could possibly take the smallest interest in me. The reason for this unconscious choice is that, for me, an obliteration of incident was necessary to keep the sense of continuity in the memory that fostered the germinating process I have spoken of. And it is clear to

me, though not demonstrable to anyone else, that this has been imitated, on a level that consciousness and memory cannot reach, from Blake, who similarly obliterated incident in his own life, and for similar reasons. One who found Byron more congenial as a preceptor would doubtless adopt a different life-style.

Blake, while he is very much a man of his time, tends to pull his critic out of the historical period in which he falls. So while I naturally had to become familiar with Ossian and Gray and Chatterton, I also found myself looking through a great variety of other writers in search of ideas that would give me some clue to Blake. I do not mean that I read very systematically in mystical or occult literature. Most of the misguided critics I mentioned above told me that that was where the real analogues to Blake's thinking were. But I found it hard to understand why Blake interested me so much when most mystical and occult writing interested me not at all. I soon discovered that I had to take seriously Blake's own statement that he belonged with the poets and artists, and read accordingly. But again, reading simply in the 1750–1820 period of Blake's own lifetime was not only insufficient, but in many respects misleading. This fact was important to me, because it dramatized the difficulty of knowing what not to read, which I have already alluded to. The historical period has firmly established itself as the normal area of scholarship because it both limits and directs one's reading, and in nearly every case it is a safe guide to follow. Blake was an exception, and a very significant one.

When I was taking a course in Blake from the late Herbert Davis, I was assigned a paper on Blake's *Milton*, which I sat down to write, as was my regular bad habit in those days, the night before. The foreground of the paper was commentary, which was assuredly difficult enough for that poem, but in the background there was some principle that kept eluding me. On inspection, the principle seemed to be that Milton and Blake were connected by their use of the Bible, which was not merely commonplace but seemed antiliterary as well. If Milton and Blake were alike on this point, that likeness merely concealed what was individual about each of them, so that in pursuing the likeness I was chasing a shadow and avoiding the substance. Around about three in the morning a different kind of intuition hit me, though it took me twenty years to articulate it. The two poets were connected by the *same* thing, and sameness leads to individual variety, just as likeness leads to monotony. I began dimly to see that the

principle pulling me away from the historical period was the principle of mythological framework. The Bible had provided a frame of mythology for European poets: an immense number of critical problems began to solve themselves as soon as one realized this.

Further, biblical mythology had not remained static, but had grown with a catholicity greater than that of the Church itself, annexing the whole of classical mythology, and the erotic or "courtly love" literature as well, as contrapuntal descants on its own theme. The fact that one mythology could absorb another indicated that all mythologies were imaginatively much alike. Christianity had similarly absorbed the older Teutonic mythology, because the latter also had a world tree like that of Eden, a world-girdling serpent like Leviathan, a god hung on a tree as a sacrifice to himself, a last day, and a creation. A literature grows out of the primitive verbal culture which contains a mythology; it can grow out of any mythology, but it is a historical fact that our literature is most directly descended from the biblical myth.

Of course this particular discovery was a natural one for me to make at a time when I was actually a student of theology. This latter fact has proved useful to many people. A "Maoist" pamphlet, for example, describes me as "the High Priest of clerical obscurantism," and its cover depicts a series of black-cloaked monks, with hoods suggesting the Ku Klux Klan. I think the actual effect of my theological training has been rather the opposite of that. It is true that my attitude to teaching, and probably to scholarship as well, has always been an evangelical attitude and that I was not satisfied with my own theories until I began to see how they could be made the basis for a system of teaching literature in sequence, at all levels from kindergarten to graduate school. But actually the Bible preoccupied me, not because it represented a religious "position" congenial to my own, but for the opposite reason. It illustrated the imaginative assumptions on which Western poets had proceeded; consequently, the study of it pointed the way towards a phenomenological criticism which would be as far as possible free of presuppositions. I am not by any means sure that it is possible really to get free of presuppositions, but it is obvious that all genuine advance in knowledge goes along with a continued attempt to objectify and become aware of the assumptions one is starting from. Poets do not write, like Swift's spider, "out of their own bowels, and in a restricted compass." The

poet is taken over by a mythical and metaphorical organism, with its historical roots in the Bible, and the integrity of that organism is his muse, the mother that brings to life a being separate both from herself and from him.

So far from hitching literature to a structure of belief, this principle actually emancipates literature from questions of belief altogether. But, of course, for many centuries the poet was regarded as subordinate in authority to other types of writers, such as theologians. Their method of writing, it was thought, had more direct access to truth; the poet's function was to produce a rhetorical echo of that truth, addressing the emotions and will and trying to persuade them to align themselves on the side of truth. This view assumed that literature was serious in proportion to its allegorical relationship to religion. Later on, as religious anxieties gave place to more secular and political ones, it continued to be believed that the realist, who studied the life around him and reflected it in his writing, had a seriousness that the mere romancer, who told stories for fun, could not match. The historian of nineteenth-century fiction, for example, finds that the backbone of his historical study is constituted by the great realists, George Eliot, Jane Austen, Thackeray, and certain carefully selected aspects of Scott, Dickens, and Henry James. Such a book as *Alice in Wonderland* is obviously a masterpiece of its kind, was immensely popular in its day and has never lost its popularity, but somehow it doesn't fit the history. And just as a highbrow in Old English times would probably regard a saint's life as more serious than *Beowulf*, so most modern critics would regard social realism, of the kind that clearly reflects the life around it, as more serious than fantasy or adventure, where there is a strong emphasis on the structure of the story, designed primarily to keep the reader turning the pages.

This leads to another far-reaching critical principle. Every primitive verbal culture contains a number of stories, of which some gradually assume a particular importance as "true," or in some way more deeply significant. These are the stories that are most readily describable as myths, and they are the ones that take root in a specific society and provide for that society a network of shared allusion and experience. Such myths differ in social function, but not in structure, from the folktales and legends that are often told simply for fun by wandering storytellers. Thus, in European literature the biblical

stories have a seriousness not ascribed to folktales or legends, which are closely analogous, if not identical, in structure. As literature develops, some poets, such as Dante and Milton, recreate the central myths; others, such as Shakespeare, have the social role of entertainers and turn rather to folktale and legend. But the former group recreate the central myths on the same imaginative basis that the latter are using, and the latter group, if they treat their themes with enough intensity, give them the same kind of significance that the central myths have.

Some time ago I had occasion to read Katherine Anne Porter's *Ship of Fools*. It is not a favorite novel of mine, but it struggles hard to be a serious one, and it seeks seriousness through allegory, like the Sebastian Brant poem from which it derives its name. The setting is a German ship sailing from Mexico to Germany in 1932, and every episode, such as the excluding of a Jew from the captain's table, is part of an allegorical relationship of the story to the rise of Nazism in Germany. Later, when stranded in an airport, I pulled another ship story off the paperback shelves, Paul Gallico's *The Poseidon Adventure*. This was a thriller about a ship that turned upside down in a wreck, leaving the surviving passengers to climb upwards towards the bottom of the ship. This story being designed for entertainment, it concentrated on the shape of the story, and the shape of the story derives from what I call an archetype, a story type that has been used thousands of times before, for which the biblical model is the Exodus. The author being a professional and intelligent writer, I knew that he would indicate some awareness of this fact before long, and two-thirds of the way through he did so. He explained that the passengers were undertaking this desperate and apparently futile climb because up had always been good and down bad, that damnation went down, the resurrection up, that mythology puts monsters underground and graceful fantasies of light in the upper air. In the same chapter the leader of the expedition, a clergyman, gets fed up with his own notion of God and commits suicide: not a very convincing episode, but an Exodus story needs a Moses figure who doesn't make it all the way.

I am not comparing the two books: I am noting the survival of the distinction between a more serious literature that reflects important truths allegorically and a less serious literature, designed for entertainment, that follows a certain storytelling formula. I am also suggesting that an a priori value distinction between them is critically

unsound. The reading of a formulaic book, such as a detective story, may not be in itself a significant experience. But even such a book can take on significance through the resonance of context. A detective story is normally a comedy, and while any individual comedy, from Plautus to modern television, may be silly or trifling, the importance of studying comedy itself, as a whole, is very considerable. For one thing, once a literal belief in a mythology declines, and biblical stories are no longer generally assumed to be historically factual, it becomes increasingly obvious that the real affinities of a mythology are not with the waking world but with the dream world. A mythology is a construct belonging to art and not to nature: it is not a description of the outer world, a crude form of philosophy or science, but a cultural model, expressing the way in which man wants to shape and reshape the civilization he himself has made. Comedy, which tends toward the victory of desire over reality, indicates this fact more clearly than any other archetypal form.

The same principle is central to the teaching of literature, especially in the most elementary stages. From kindergarten onwards, the teacher is not instilling literature into a mind that doesn't know any, but reshaping the student's total verbal experience. This experience has been built up by television, movies, and the conversation of his parents and classmates as well as by his reading. It already contains a great deal of mythology, much of it phony, derived from advertising or class stereotypes, and literature is or should be the means of leading the student from his present subjective social vision into the total social vision of mankind.

All this may not be very helpful in discussing the question of the university's support of research. The humanities usually get the lion's share of the library budget, but apart from that they are usually regarded by administrators as low-budget departments. In fact, there are times when I wonder whether "low-budget departments" would not be the best definition of the humanities. Some branches of the humanities, of course, are inherently expensive, an obvious example being archaeology, on which a good many humane disciplines are heavily dependent. But it is still possible to bring a man into a university of a senior level in the humanities without the great expenditure for equipment and the like which an equivalent appointment in the sciences would necessitate.

Universities, however, are caught in a paradoxical situation: they have to build up as good a library as they can, and yet they must maintain travel grants to enable scholars in the humanities to go to still better libraries. The immense resources of modern libraries, which can bring so much to the scholar's doorstep, are of course indispensable, but most of them imply that the scholar already knows what he is looking for. If he is doing original research, he may not know. In that case he has still to be turned loose in the British Museum or the Library of Congress with a sense of serendipity built up by his previous experience of the subject.

We have all heard how the Bodleian Library in Oxford got rid of its Shakespeare folio, which it later had to buy back again at much greater expense. The inference is often that the Oxford librarians of that day were fools. Actually, they were entirely right: in terms of what Oxford then taught and studied, Shakespeare was no more use to them than collections of nineteenth-century sermons would be now to the kind of college that hands out diplomas to young women studying ballet. After the modern languages were established in universities, library buying was largely confined to a select canon of approved writers. The minor writers came in on a preferential list, those that had been dead the longest getting the most attention. The scholarly revolution which I have helped to agitate has resulted in weakening the distinction between classical and popular literature. Some years ago, when I was visiting a university in the United States, a professor responsible for much of the library buying in the romantic period came in to see me with a catalogue. He had a chance of buying a large amount of the "horrid mysteries" of the 1790s, and was hesitating. I said, "Grab it at once." But he was doubtful whether the inherent value of this work justified the expenditure, because his was a small college with a restricted budget. I imagine that he now regrets his caution, in an age when "Gothic is in" and the best and brightest graduate students are likely to be paying attention to Rider Haggard as well as to George Eliot. For university library purposes, there certainly is such a thing as junk, but junk is no longer definable in terms of a conventional standard of literary values.

The problem of preserving the personal community is crucial to all universities, and to all aspects of it. One should always be aware of the limitations of what is technically possible, because the future that is technically possible is not necessarily the future that society wants

or can absorb. One is constantly hearing from gadget-happy technocrats about how it is, or soon will be, no longer necessary to give lectures or attend them, to build libraries or staff them, to write papers or deliver them to audiences. What such fantasies do not take in is the importance of community and personal contact in the scholarly life. Any student faced by a television screen instead of a human countenance could tell them about this.

It is for the same reason that all educational hardware has to be confined to certain specialized uses. Similarly, many libraries acquire a great deal of material that is really archival and should perhaps be in another institution. This would include the foul papers and other excreta of contemporary poets, for which there was such a vogue a few years ago, and which for some poets made the faking of draft papers quite a profitable business. In my own case, I have had to throw my energy into a more centripetal movement of scholarship, trying to avoid specialization in order to articulate a number of central problems of critical theory. This meant that a specialized research library was only intermittently useful to me, and I have often found myself drifting from the research library into the undergraduate working library because of the increasing affinity of my work to obvious books. But there is something too of finding one's way back to the focus of the university community. When I mention this tendency of mine to my colleagues, I find that a large number of them share it.

I have always remained in Canada, and perhaps the influences of the Canadian environment have played a significant role in my life, allowing for the indirectness of influence that I have already mentioned. I think in any case that the effect of one's teachers and senior colleagues is derived mainly from the reflections that one is impelled to make as a result of having known them, rather than from what they have directly taught or said. My own teachers in Toronto included Pelham Edgar, whose main academic interest was Henry James and James's treatment of the North Atlantic schizophrenia which is so central to Canadian life also. Then there was E. J. Pratt, Canada's most important English poet, who was a full-time teaching member of the department. His existence helped me to become more detached from the romantic mystique that opposes creative writers to critical ones. In Canada poets are conditioned to utter a good deal of anti-academic patter as a part of their own sales pitch, even when

they are struggling for tenure appointments in universities themselves. The mystique tends to assume that creative people are the people who write poems or stories, and feels that such people ought to have a specially protected place in the community, somewhat analogous to that of the people who can speak Irish in Ireland. There is nothing wrong with this except the fallacy of attaching the conception of creativity to the genres of poetry and fiction rather than to the people working in them. This fallacy is worldwide and extends, for instance, to the Nobel Prize Committee in Sweden, who search over the world for poets and novelists but never consider the claims of critical or expository writing. My third teacher, John Robins, was interested in ballads, folktales, and popular literature, along with Old and Middle English. He had much to do with my understanding of the main features of Canadian literature, including Pratt's poetry, which are so like those of Old English in reflecting a paradoxical tension between the primitive and the overcivilized. He probably had something to do too with my notion of archetypes, which are really an expansion of the themes and motifs of folktale into the rest of literature.

Later on, I began to understand the extent to which this almost one-dimensional country has been preoccupied with communications of all kinds, from the most physical to the most ethereal. Many Canadians, including Harold Innes and Innes's disciple Marshall McLuhan, have been interested in the totality of communication and the essential unity of its activity, whether it is building railways or sending messages. Innes developed out of his study of the fur trade in Canada a vast historical communication theory, concerned with the ways in which the control of communication media by a certain class or group in society conditions that society. A similar sense of the unity of communication has affected me, and has had a good deal to do with what I have called my evangelical attitude to the teaching of literature.

The first thing one realizes, of course, is that communication media are formidably efficient, and the effect of this is among other things to make every senior professor a cockshy of rapid transit. He has his growing body of former students, who send him everything they write as a simple routine act; colleagues who ask his advice about everything from changing jobs or making appointments to rearranging the arguments of their current books; publishers who keep

sending new books to him for comment; chairmen of program committees who have found that jet planes make it possible for anyone to visit anywhere, and for conferences to be held in Pakistan or Brazil as easily as closer to home. There is also a continuous cataract of unsolicited material, stacks of song from hopeful poets and theses with notes attached saying in effect: "My supervisor says I'm crazy, but I know *you'll* understand." In this situation, an enlightened university administration should understand that the most important form of assistance they can offer him is that of the nonacademic secretary. Such a secretary can make all the difference between a properly functioning scholar and a harried intellectual carpetbagger, and he should not have to undertake an uncongenial administrative job in order to acquire one.

There seem to me to be three main stages in communication. There is the initial stage of separation, where communication is physically difficult and precarious. This developed in Canadian culture what I have elsewhere called a garrison mentality, and which survives in Canadian separatist movements. The garrison mentality, however, had its positive, even its heroic, side, as we can see when we think of the sheer physical, to say nothing of the mental, effort that scholars in Saskatchewan or Alberta had to make to maintain their standards before the days of planes and microfilm. The first impact of improved communication is destructive. If one is building a road from point A to point B, the first thing one has to do is bulldoze and cut through underbrush. If a student is being taught at school, the effort to reach him has to cut through the underbrush of the anxieties and prejudices and snobberies by which he attempts to maintain his isolated security. The immediate result of this destructive activity is a sense of uniformity and a loss of individuality. This is the stage that the communication crisis of the sixties is trying to emerge from now.

Similar stages have affected the universities internally. Each department tends to become a garrison in itself; every development of scholarship batters at its barriers. My own conception of mythology is one that attacks the separation of one language department from another, the separation of literature from comparative religion, even the separation of the humanities from the social sciences. One response to this is to introduce interdisciplinary courses, where representatives of departments meet politely but suspiciously, like diplomats arranging for a cease-fire, or courses in general education

or general humanities or great books or Western civilization. This is the second, or uniform, stage of improved communications, which is less a solution to the problem than a symptom of it. One hopes for rapid emergence to the third stage, when it is clearly realized that knowledge, like St. Augustine's God, has its center everywhere and its circumference nowhere.

Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

Blacks and Higher Education—Some Reflections

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY SYSTEM is also an important economic sector, a fact frequently overlooked by academics. It is the source of over 700,000 teaching and administrative jobs, and it generates well over \$5 billion of economic activity—more if we include construction costs as well as staff payrolls and institutional purchases. It is useful to see the system of higher education not only in terms of advanced schooling, but also as an economic entity with important implications for minority employment and opportunities.

As an economic entity, the universities have proved as discriminatory as any other business and a good deal worse than many. College and university faculties are over 95 percent white, and high-ranking black administrators are just as rare as high-ranking corporate officers. The smugness and self-righteousness so often shown toward industry by some academics is not justified, since colleges and universities have proved as discriminatory as the most recalcitrant and backward corporations.

The academic community appears to have elevated concepts of “merit” and “excellence” to the heights of mythology in its effort to preserve the prerogatives of white males. Faculty jobs are as often distributed on the basis of the “old boy network” as not, and since blacks are largely excluded from the personal relationships that lead

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to such job offers, they are also largely excluded from teaching jobs. Another barrier to blacks is the prestige attached to degrees. The half of black college graduates from predominately black colleges are at a disadvantage because department chairmen are often fixated on Ivy League degrees. Personal "merit," then, is often in the eyes of the beholder, eyes all too easily impressed by paper documents and blind to personal skills and attributes.

"Affirmative action" is a phrase that sends chills down college administrators' backs. It is a great leveling agent, equalizing union leaders from the construction trades and college presidents, since both groups adopt defensive postures and angrily denounce "quotas." The record is replete with instances of universities stalling in the face of HEW requests that they comply with the law and initiate programs to increase minority employment. These requests are the essence of moderation. HEW asks colleges and universities to survey their employment practices, come up with a census revealing minority employment and pay scales, and then correct any inequities. Generous timetables are granted, often up to five years, not counting the university-inspired delays. Standards are not expected to be compromised. As J. Stanley Pottinger, HEW's civil rights director, stated, "Our sole interest is to ensure that . . . employment criteria are not invidiously discriminatory on their face, and are implemented in a non-discriminatory manner." And he emphasized that hiring criteria are to be determined by university officials.

"Quotas," then, are a phony issue, a red flag to divert attention from the real issue of discrimination by falsely categorizing reasonable numerical *goals* and generalized intentions as rigid mathematical formulas. Nevertheless, if numerical goals and timetables are not formulated, then, as one commentator has stated, "the future will resemble the past." To rely on administrators' goodwill and self-policing would ensure that no changes are made in the widespread discrimination that exists. Self-styled "color-blind" policies would leave the buddy system of hiring intact and continue to freeze minorities out of the job picture. So long as blacks constitute a smaller proportion of college graduates and holders of advanced degrees, they will necessarily constitute a smaller proportion of college faculty members. There is no reason to hire unqualified blacks, just as there is no reason to hire unqualified whites. But within the necessary constraints of the limited job pool, there is no reason

why qualified black candidates should be consistently passed over in favor of whites chosen because of the school they went to, the professors they know, or the advantages they hold that are denied to others.

It is unseemly for those who regard themselves as the repository of our society's values and knowledge to maintain racial barriers to admission to faculty and administrative jobs, to insist on higher standards for minorities than apply to whites, to attempt to circumvent federal antidiscrimination laws, or to regard their positions as more privileged than those of other sectors of our society. All of these attributes are endemic to academia today, and none has a place in an open society. Elites wither and die when they are not invigorated by fresh blood, and that holds just as much for academic elites as for political and economic ones.

Item: A study conducted by a group of Harvard professors, headed by a Harvard graduate who attended top prep schools, has discovered that education has only a minimal impact on earnings.

Item: A Census Bureau report states that college graduates earn \$279,000 more than high school graduates over their lifetimes. "There are monetary gains associated with successfully achieving each identifiable educational plateau," the report states.

Like it or not, the academic community must face the fact that the college diploma is no longer an accessory to indicate a "finishing" process for upper- and upper-middle-class individuals. It is now a necessity for many poor and working-class youths hopeful of economic security. A *New York Times* report of a March conference of university presidents quoted a participant as bewailing that the university had changed "from an ivory tower to a public utility." The *Times* reporter wryly commented: "There were few members of minority groups and women at yesterday's conference."

There was apparently little questioning that "the ivory tower" is the rightful role of the university. Although I appreciate the need for a community of scholars advancing human knowledge while cushioned from the clamor of daily concerns, institutions of higher learning do not exist as secluded monasteries. They are instruments of economic and social mobility whose claim on the public and private purse implies societal usefulness and engagement. Nor is there

any inherent mandate to keep such proposed ivory towers solely in the hands of white males. The functions and practices of institutions of higher learning have been responsive to their social environments and have changed drastically throughout history. I know of no natural law that decrees they have reached such a state of perfection today that they should be insulated from further changes, especially when those changes would leave them intact with the one exception that minorities would have the same access to their benefits as are presently enjoyed by the middle-class whites whose prerogatives are often financed by taxes on the poor and the black.

Many colleges went through the motions of recruiting black students in the late sixties and early seventies. Some, appalled by the lack of blacks among their students, were sincere in trying to fulfill what they correctly perceived as their moral obligations. Others were fearful of losing federal research contracts. Still others enjoyed a brief fling of social consciousness in the wake of national concern over ghetto disorders. For many, the admission of black students represented a bracing thrust into the "real world," and they engaged in a burst of romanticized overcompensation, preferring to select "authentic ghetto types" even if they were unqualified or needed remedial work the college was not about to offer. Their scorn was reserved for those black students who studied hard, did not practice self-segregation, and were not overly militant. "She's not really 'black,' " a department head at a prestigious university told an Urban League official, referring to a graduate student who was ambitious and who racked up high grades through hard study.

Now the bloom is off. Black students are less of a novelty, and white faculty and administrators, like other middle Americans, have tired of the effort to change institutions and provide equal opportunity. Black enrollment at predominately white institutions has peaked and is falling off.

The entering class of freshmen in the fall of 1973 was 7.8 percent black. A year earlier it had been 8.7 percent black. Enrollments of other minorities dropped too, the slack being made up by students from families making over \$30,000 per year. The "merit" system as applied to college entrance appears to be restricted more to the ability to pay than to other factors.

Some colleges cite lower federal aid funds as one reason for the drop, although I did not see any parade of college presidents trooping

up to Capitol Hill to demand more generous financial aid to students. Closer to the mark may be a *Wall Street Journal* report that there is "a lack of pressure on the schools." In the absence of outside pressure from alumni, public officials, students, and faculty, potential black students are passed by. One college official has been recorded as saying: "The riots are no more and the pressure is off." And the *Journal* quotes "a recruiter at a prestigious Southern university" who reports that administrators "told me their only commitment was to use government funds. They never had any real commitment."

The cost of attending college is escalating rapidly, raising the prospect of a class system of education with the poor shut out because of inability to pay. The cost of room, board, tuition, and pocket money now runs to over \$4,000 per year. That represents a little less than two-thirds of the median black family income and exceeds the total income of a third of all black families. The cost of obtaining a higher education is well beyond the reach of the majority of white families as well. Like just about every item on the list of reforms backed by blacks, increased federal aid to enable the less affluent to continue their educations will benefit far more whites than blacks.

Open admissions programs demonstrate the vast benefits reaped by white students from supposedly "black" programs. The introduction of open admissions in New York City's public colleges and universities led to the first major influx of Italians and other white ethnics in the history of those institutions. The student composition of the city's four-year colleges reveals that, compared with the national average, their students are more likely to be black or minority-group members, to have had higher high school grades, to come from poorer, less well educated families, and to live in working-class neighborhoods. Open admissions, then, is an engine for social mobility without necessarily compromising the quality of a school's intake. For example, City University freshmen whose high school average was only C+ or less amounted to 34 percent of the entering class in two-year colleges and only 9 percent in four-year schools. By contrast, the average national figures were 45 percent for two-year schools and 21 percent for four-year colleges. Still a subject of controversy, perhaps because of the reluctance of faculty to deal with a student body of altered ethnic composition and life-style, there is no evidence that CUNY's high academic standards have suffered.

Black students on white campuses are victims of destructive myths that often distort the degree of alienation and separatism that exists. The typical picture of the black student as being an angry militant refusing all contact with whites and obsessed with his black studies courses has little relation to reality. A survey by the Educational Policy Center found that although about half feel themselves victims of racial discrimination, the majority say that race is not a factor in choosing friends and activities, and only 15 percent would prefer to live in all-black or minority housing on campus. Although most report their previous schooling ranged from poor to fair, 85 percent maintain grade averages of C or higher and a solid majority plan to attend graduate school.

Drawing on reports from the American Council of Education, federal statistics, and research analysis of various statistics and studies made in recent years, the National Urban League's research department has come up with a rounded picture of students enrolled at predominately black colleges, a picture that shows ambition and determination to succeed in the face of heavy odds and demeaning stereotypes. Almost two-thirds (61 percent) of the men and more than two-thirds (69 percent) of the women who entered black colleges in 1972 planned to continue beyond the bachelor's degree. In all colleges, somewhat over half (54 percent) of the men and only 43 percent of the women planned graduate work.

Increased interest in the pursuit of a business career is obvious among freshmen in black colleges today. Whereas only 19 percent of the men and 9 percent of the women indicated business as their major field of study in 1969, 26 percent of the men and 22 percent of the women planned to major in business in 1972. This trend toward a business career is also apparent in their choice of a future occupation. For example, in 1969 only 18 percent of the black male freshmen planned to be businessmen, but in 1972, 24 percent planned to go into business.

Yet blacks are still underrepresented in the sciences. Only one-third of the black male freshmen indicated that they intended to major in the biological or physical sciences. Women freshmen, in general, appear to be moving away from an overwhelming emphasis on the humanities to increased interest in the sciences. Those in black colleges are making much of the shift from the humanities into business majors.

A change is also apparent in women's career plans. Twenty-two percent of the women entering black colleges and 13 percent of all women freshmen indicated career choices in the higher professions in 1972, whereas in 1969 only 14 percent of the women entering black colleges and 8 percent of all women freshmen indicated these career choices. Thus, despite the popular belief that large numbers of black students are majoring in black studies programs, the strong shift toward business careers indicates that the educational and occupational plans of most black college students are pragmatic.

The black student is essentially a very practical person. Two-thirds or more of those entering black colleges want to be authorities in their field, help others in difficulty, and develop a philosophy of life. Over three-fourths agree that the primary benefit of college is monetary, and almost two-thirds have as one of their objectives to be well-off financially. This emphasis on practical success is much more apparent in the black students than among students in general.

That these students do not want to be given their degrees without earning them is evident from the fact that three-fourths of them feel that there should be the same standards for everyone. Although 69 percent want the disadvantaged given preferential treatment in admissions, only 55 percent felt that public institutions should adopt open admission.

In other matters, their attitudes are similar to those of students in general: all strongly believe that women should have job equality, that government is neither controlling pollution nor protecting the consumer, that the wealthy should pay more taxes and so forth. Interestingly enough, two-thirds of the students in institutions of higher learning, black as well as white, had as one of their chief objectives the raising of a family.

This picture of the black student bodes well for the future because the immediate need is for large-scale entry of blacks into positions of business and corporate power and into the professions. Blacks are absent from the ranks of key professions to such a degree that even the most determined opponent of quotas must understand that discrimination is endemic. Furthermore, unless black people enter these professions, they will be permanently condemned to second-class economic and social status in the United States. Only 2 percent of all accountants are black, less than 1 percent of engineers and lawyers, and 2 percent of doctors, dentists, and economists. Blacks

are prime subjects of urban and regional planners, but less than 5 percent of such planners are black. A list of dozens of professions ranging from actuaries to astronomers shows that blacks are 2 percent or less of the national total in nearly all.

While the real issue for blacks is increasing access to higher education and entering business and the professions, the media have been obsessed with the more sensational aspects of black studies programs. These programs are giving every indication of overcoming initial problems and settling down to becoming useful areas of study for a small minority of blacks whose career goals may demand expertise in interdisciplinary programs in black and African history culture. Their continued existence and their ability to endure may be dependent upon the degree to which they can exemplify academic excellence and reject political and ideological manipulation. Jacob Katz, an Israeli scholar writing in *Commentary* on the proliferation of Jewish studies programs on campuses around the world, has raised questions of vital importance to blacks. Change *Jewish* to *black* in the following quotation, and you have an important statement on the durability of black studies programs:

This quantitative expansion raises the question of the quality of the achievement. In other words, is the work being done by Jewish historians, for example, on a level with that of general historians? It is a question that has a social as well as a scholastic dimension, for the emancipation implied in the acceptance by the academy of Jewish studies is genuine and meaningful only insofar as it is grounded in authentic scholarship. In cases where departments and courses in Jewish studies have come into being for non-academic reasons—for instance, to accommodate the sensibilities of local Jewish communities—that acceptance, and the larger social acceptance it implies, may well be fictitious, and this in the long run can be worse than not being accepted at all.

Most crucial to the black community and the nation is the continued survival of the black colleges. Their doors were open when white colleges would not allow blacks in, much less welcome them. Their doors are open today to masses of black students who cannot afford the high-cost predominately white institutions. The bulk of them are in the South, where the majority of black people still live. Generally, their students are poorer than those attending predominantly white colleges. Today, as in the past, the black colleges provide

the training and dedication offered reluctantly, if at all, by their more prestigious brother institutions. It is the black colleges that have graduated 75 percent of all black Ph.D's, 75 percent of all black army officers, 80 percent of all black federal judges, and 85 percent of all black doctors. These institutions, then, have profoundly influenced the development of black Americans, and there is no doubt that they will continue to do so.

The black college is the only major American institution whose necessity is questioned by large numbers of people. It is the only American institution subjected to the suggestion that it self-destruct. People who see no problem with the maintenance of a predominately Jewish Brandeis or a Catholic Notre Dame find dozens of reasons to object to a predominately black Howard or Morehouse. And yet the black college represents to black students what other schools traditionally associated with a particular religious outlook or ethnic group represent to other Americans—the availability of the choice of going to a school that embraces their past, their concerns, and their values.

Given the importance of these black institutions to the black community, given the outstanding job they are doing in educating young blacks who have no other alternative as well as those who prefer such schools, and given their function as a repository of black intellectual, cultural, and educational resources, their preservation and improvement must rank high on the list of national educational priorities.

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Kenneth S. Lynn

Adulthood in American Literature

IN 1922, WHEN THE CRITICAL REEVALUATION of nineteenth-century American literature was just getting under way, D. H. Lawrence wrote: "We like to think of the old-fashioned American classics as children's books. Just childishness on our part."¹ Lawrence was only half-right: the childishness is in the books as well as in ourselves.

It is, of course, true that Cooper, Irving, Melville, Hawthorne, and Poe created characters of all ages. Yet, for the most part, they were curiously insensitive to the dramatic possibilities of the human life cycle and made only the crudest effort to distinguish between the fascinatingly different stages of its later half. If, for example, a historian with a particular interest in the family and in problems of early maturity should try to find out how young married couples in the early nineteenth century responded to the sudden onset of familial responsibilities, he would gain nothing from reading the best American writers of the period. For, while the books they wrote were intensely psychological, the fears and anxieties that grip their characters rarely serve to illuminate the dilemmas of particular age groups. The terrors experienced by Roderick Usher, Clifford Pyncheon, and Ichabod Crane are states of feeling that anyone, young or old, can understand. Thus it was not just the thrilling action and detective-story suspense of the old-fashioned American books that caused them to be appropriated by an audience that was much

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younger than the authors had in mind; their reductionist renditions of grown-up life also made it easy for juvenile readers to regard these books as belonging to them. By the end of the nineteenth century, the masterworks of an earlier era—an entire literature!—could be found in the closets and cupboards of children's bedrooms.²

Cooper's *Prairie* (1827) is a good example of the sort of childishness I am talking about. The novel was composed by a thirty-eight-year-old man, but its portrayal of Natty Bumppo as an octogenarian could as well be the work of a boy of twelve. A juvenile perspective is established in the very first appearance of the trapper. Coming to a halt at the top of a rise, Natty compels us to look up at him in the manner of awestruck children gazing at a strange adult:

The sun had fallen below the crest of the nearest wave of the prairie, leaving the usual rich and glowing train on its track. In the centre of this flood of fiery light a human form appeared, drawn against the gilded background as distinctly, and seemingly as palpable, as though it would come within the grasp of any extended hand. The figure was colossal; the attitude musing and melancholy But imbedded, as it was, in its setting of garish light, it was impossible to distinguish its just proportions or true character.

Coming closer to the man against the sky, we see that he is very old. His "withered" form and "look of emaciation, if not of suffering," clearly show that he has endured the hardships of an outdoor life for "more than eighty seasons." Yet as soon as he moves, his decrepitude drops away from him as if by magic: "With a facility a little remarkable for his years and appearance," he shoulders his "heavy rifle" and plunges down the hillside in order to show an emigrant family where to pitch camp for the night.

The episode launches a systematic evasion of the painful problem of being an old man in a young country. In all likelihood, Cooper created the hero of his novel in the image of the grizzled pioneers whom he remembered from his youth in Cooperstown, New York, in the 1790s, but who by the canal-building 1820s had long since disappeared. Cooper's re-creation, however, is not really old; he is a young man in a gray wig, an elegiac symbol ungrounded in human truth and possessed of only a fraction of the poignant meaning he might have had. At an age at which most pioneers would have been content to sit near the stove in country stores, Natty has found a new life as a beaver trapper in the high plains country of western

Nebraska and eastern Wyoming. He traverses this huge territory alone and on foot ("horses have I never craved, nor even used"), sleeping at night on brush piles under the open sky and killing animals for food as he goes. Despite his periodic protestations that his prowess with a rifle is not what it used to be, the novel demonstrates that Natty is no bleary-eyed relic, but the Hawkeye of old. Not only can he still take "a leaping buck atwixt the antlers" and make short shrift of grizzlies and panthers, but when several younger people are in danger of being run over by a herd of stampeding buffaloes, he single-handedly saves their lives:

The old man, who had stood all this while leaning on his rifle, and regarding the movements of the herd with a steady eye, now deemed it time to strike his blow. Leveling his piece at the foremost bull, *with an agility that would have done credit to his youth* [italics mine], he fired. The animal received the bullet on the matted hair between his horns, and fell to his knees . . .

There is also nothing wrong with his sense of hearing. Although a man less than half his age interprets a distant sound in the night as the pounding footsteps of a herd of terrified buffaloes being driven by a panther, Natty knows better: "Your ears are cheats," cries the old man; "the leaps are too long for the buffalo, and too regular for terror." A short time later, the appearance of a band of Sioux Indians riding horseback proves him right—as always.

Eight pages from the end of a long novel, this gerontic marvel finally lies down and dies. At long last, his eyes are "glazed." Even on his deathbed, however, Natty denies the realities of adulthood. He experiences no more pain or fear than the sunset which is simultaneously occurring, and as he speaks his valedictory, the old trapper's force of voice has "the same startling effect upon his hearers as is produced by the trumpet, when its blast rises suddenly and freely on the air." As he himself says, "I die as I have lived."³

Leslie Fiedler has claimed that American storytellers are pathologically incapable of dealing with adult sexuality and have been driven as a result toward an obsession with death.⁴ But the classic American writers had very little to say on a lot of subjects, including factory work, railroad construction, banking, farming, newspaper editing, running for political office, school teaching, child rearing, housecleaning, bill paying, and the systematic exploitation of Negro slaves. As for their alleged substitution of death for sex, they skirted the

agonies of terminal illness as carefully as they did the excitements of lovemaking. Their inability to deal with adult sexuality, in other words, was only a symptom of a larger, more encompassing failure.

In lieu of all the life they left out of their books, the classic American writers told stories of self-discovery and self-preservation. Some of these narratives are distinguished by a charming humor, others by a calculated sensationalism, still others by an obviously genuine despair. But beneath their vast differences they have one characteristic in common: psychic immaturity. I say psychic immaturity because one of the signs of an underdeveloped personality is the failure to recognize that serious personal and social problems cannot be solved by running away from them. Over and over again, however, the leading characters of classic American literature react to the crises in their lives by taking to the sea or withdrawing into gloomy mansions or high-walled castles or disappearing into the forest. One of the first, and undoubtedly the most celebrated, of these escape artists was created by Washington Irving. In the character of Rip Van Winkle, Irving established the archetype of the adult hero who is a child at heart.

Easygoing Rip has spent his entire life evading responsibilities. When his shrewish but practical wife reminds him for the thousandth time that his laziness has brought them to the brink of financial ruin, Rip responds by going off into the woods, instead of back to work. Falling into his famous sleep, he enters the sort of dream-world a child might conjure up, wherein Henry Hudson and his shipmates eternally play at nine pins. Forty winks last for twenty years, at which point Rip wakes up and returns home. The American Revolution has taken place in his absence, and a quiet Dutch village is now a noisy American town. Rip is terrified by its unfamiliarity. "Everything's changed," he shouts, "and I'm changed, and I can't tell what's my name, or who I am!" Most terrifying of all to a lazy man is the realization that Dutch somnolence has given way to Yankee hustle. Thus the wide-spreading tree that had formerly shadowed the courtyard of Nicholas Vedder's inn has been replaced by a tall, skinny flagpole, and the inn is in the hands of a bustling entrepreneur named Jonathan Doolittle. Even in this alien world, however, escape is still possible, because by sleeping for twenty years Rip has successfully bypassed the remaining years of his active adulthood. His wife, moreover, who symbolized the hateful responsibilities of work

and marriage, has long since died. Taking his place on the bench at the inn door, he idles away his days with an impunity that is usually reserved for infants. By becoming old, Rip in effect has become a child again. He no longer needs to worry about behaving like a man.⁵

Within a generation of its appearance in *The Sketch Book* (1820), "Rip Van Winkle" transcended the realm of fiction and became a part of American folklore. Its childish vision had obviously touched a national nerve. Younger authors, including Richard Henry Dana, Herman Melville, and Ik Marvel, the author of *Reveries of a Bachelor*, now began to act out escapist fantasies as well as to write about them. When Henry Thoreau went to live on the banks of a pond outside Concord, Massachusetts, he, too, was seeking an alternative to the quietly desperate world of work and marriage. In the book he wrote about his experiment, he calls upon us to take him seriously, but almost every episode in *Walden* reveals an astonishing immaturity. His seemingly meticulous budget, for instance, which makes such a fuss about half-penny and quarter-penny expenditures for food and lumber, fails to make any provision for the payment of poll taxes, the possibility of catastrophic illness, the cost of a coffin, and other annoyances of adult life.

Thoreau is simply playing house at Walden Pond, yet when he encounters the Irishman John Field, who lives in a leaky shanty with his greasy-faced, bare-breasted wife and their several children, and who ekes out a cruelly marginal existence hoeing the boggy meadows for a neighboring farmer at the rate of ten dollars an acre, he has the nerve to tell the hard-pressed immigrant how to reorder his priorities. In this appalling passage, Thoreau reveals more than just a bachelor's vagueness about the sort of worries that a husband and father would have on his mind; he shows himself to be as innocent as a child:

I tried to help him with my experience, telling him that he was one of my nearest neighbors, and that I too, who came a-fishing here, and looked like a loafer, was getting my living like himself; that I lived in a tight, light, and clean house, which hardly cost more than the annual rent of such a thing as his commonly amounts to; and how, if he chose, he might in a month or two build a palace of his own; that I did not use tea, nor coffee, nor butter, nor milk, nor fresh meat, and so did not have to work to get them; again, as I did not work hard, I did not have to eat hard, and it cost me but a trifle for my food. . . . I told him, that as he worked so hard at bogging, he required thick boots and stout clothing, which yet were soon soiled and worn out,

but I wore light shoes and thin clothing, which cost not half so much, though he might think that I was dressed like a gentleman (which, however, was not the case), and in an hour or two, without labor, but as recreation, I could, if I wished, catch as many fish as I should want for two days, or earn enough money to support me a week. *If he and his family would live simply, they might all go a-huckleberrying in the summer for their amusement* [italics mine].

One hopes for Thoreau's sake that he was not entirely serious in his advice to Field and that his carefully detailed pseudobudget was mainly intended as a joke on Benjamin Franklin. There can be no doubt, however, that he meant every word of what he wrote about the correspondences between man and nature. Unfortunately, the correspondences are inexact, and his failure to acknowledge that fact is another sign of his incorrigible puerility. The seasonal metamorphoses described in *Walden* are a means of talking about the triumphant renewal of a human consciousness. What is left unsaid is that the course of the year has also made Thoreau's body twelve months older. Physically speaking, there is a terrifying lack of correspondence between nature's life cycle and man's: one is a circle, the other is an arc. The flesh and blood of an adult human being constitute a decaying, nonrenewable organism, but the only sort of physical corruption that Thoreau is prepared to talk about is the mulch on the forest floor out of which slender saplings spring. The miracle of nature's rebirth is his constant substitute for thinking about the tenuousness of his own triumph.

When Thoreau decides to leave the pond, it is for the announced reason that he has other lives to lead—and for the unannounced reason that if he stays any longer, his sense of wonder will begin to fade and his aging body will grow unresponsive. “The sun is but a morning-star”—and novelty is a hypodermic needle. For the narrator of *Walden*, as for other escape artists of his time, life is an endless series of getaways. Even the cataclysmic saga of *Moby Dick* ends with an “Epilogue” about Ishmael and a coffin life buoy.⁶

The classic American writers in their flight seldom turned back to the society in which their fellow citizens lived. Cooper sometimes did, and so did Melville in “Bartleby the Scrivener.” But the most important exception to the prevailing escapism was Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter*. A penetrating study of human relationships, the story not only involves the adulterous principals, but a wronged and

eventually vengeance-seeking husband and a disturbingly neurotic child. The novel's setting is social, its perspective is historical, and the moral victory of which it speaks at the end is achieved only through the abandonment of the sort of childish self-love that Thoreau celebrated: "In the lapse of the toilsome, thoughtful, and self-devoted years that made up Hester's life, the scarlet letter ceased to be a stigma which attracted the world's scorn and bitterness, and became a type of something to be sorrowed over, and looked upon with awe, yet with reverence too."⁷

In the later decades of the nineteenth century, the number of writers who were interested in the moral drama of adult relationships increased. The disastrous marriage of Bartley and Marcia Hubbard in Howells's *Modern Instance* climaxes in desertion and culminates in divorce. Mrs. Todd in Sarah Orne Jewett's *Country of the Pointed Firs* remains involved in the life of her community, despite anguishing personal losses. In Kate Chopin's *Awakening*, Edna Pontellier finally rebels against the traditional female role of the dutiful wife.

Even more striking, though, than the psychic maturity of certain books in late-nineteenth-century American literature is the blatant immaturity of many others. For in the wake of the Civil War, the hero who was a child at heart became a child in fact. The process of transformation began with Louisa May Alcott's *Little Men* and *Little Women*, Horatio Alger, Jr.'s *Ragged Dick*, and Thomas Bailey Aldrich's *Story of a Bad Boy*; but it was not until the enormous success of Mark Twain's *Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) that the child hero really came into his own. In the fiction of the 1880s, twelve-year-olds were difficult to avoid, especially in the weekly and monthly magazines. A decade later, Henry James and Stephen Crane also became interested in child characters. Although *Whilomville Stories* and *What Maisie Knew* are notable books, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is unquestionably the greatest achievement in this literature—and the most childish. In *Tom Sawyer*, Mark Twain had told the story of a boy in the third-person, literary language of an adult. In *Huckleberry Finn*, however, the author closed the gap between himself and his hero. Man and boy became one, as Mark Twain merged his own viewpoint with Huck's and abandoned literary language in favor of a waif's vernacular.

If the child hero had a rival in popularity in post-Civil War writing, it was the morally spontaneous, intellectually vivacious

American girl whom Howells and James delighted in writing about in their early novels and stories. Although half again as old as Mark Twain's heroes, she was by no means an adult. An innocent abroad, she invaded Europe with the intrepidity of Natty Bumppo blazing a wilderness trail or of Tom Sawyer attending his own funeral. Only rarely did Howells and James follow her into marriage, for encumbrances were not her style. She, too, was an escape artist who wanted no limits to be placed upon her. She, too, symbolized the remarkable reluctance of nineteenth-century American writers to implicate their characters in the confining circumstances of adult life.

How can we account for their reluctance? What were the sources of the psychic immaturity that inspired so many childish themes, childish characters, childish points of view? The fact that most of the front-rank writers of nineteenth-century America grew up in families in which the father was either dead, missing, physically crippled, or financially inept suggests the possibility that fears about growing up affected their literary imaginations. Yet their perception that their fathers were weak and had somehow let them down was not the only source, or even the main source, of the immaturity of their art. Public events were also in the writers' minds, and their effects were decisive. The childish qualities of nineteenth-century American literature had their origins in the historical circumstances that fostered childishness in an entire civilization.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, colonial America had been deeply involved in transoceanic affairs. At the same time, the colonists had persevered in the effort to build a society of their own. The paradox of being a part of a world order and yet separate from it proved politically fruitful. The literature of the pre-Revolutionary period expresses the proud realization of the colonists that they had come of age with extraordinary speed. Psychopolitical fables such as Francis Hopkinson's "Pretty Story" recount the history of the British-American relationship in terms of parents and rapidly maturing children; the point of these stories is always that the new imperial policies of George II represented a monstrous attempt to reverse the course of the human life cycle.

After achieving political independence, however, America sought isolation, and an unprecedented innocence settled upon the national mind. We seemed to think that we had seceded from history.

International relations were for other people, not for morally immaculate Americans.

Within this secluded miniworld, the frontier beckoned, the economy burgeoned, and the fluidity of American society soon became the envy of the world. Unfortunately, spectacular opportunities also made for anxiety and alienation, especially among the middle-class white males who had the best chances to get ahead. Indeed, for many such men the endless process of competing became a waking nightmare. It took them away from their wives and children, set them in opposition to other men, and stunted their emotional growth. The fluidity of American life also beguiled its psychological victims into thinking that someday they would deal with their unhappiness by pulling up stakes and moving their families to a new location; in a more drastic version, they thought of going alone. Why should they continue to carry intolerable burdens when they could so easily walk out the door and start life all over again somewhere else? The number of men who actually dropped out of sight in this way will never be known, but statistics are not really the point. It was the example set by the runaways, not their precise number, that counted. For these disappearances lent plausibility to the daydreams of men who stayed home, thereby diminishing their involvement in the only reality they would ever know. On the international level, the secessionist fantasies of nineteenth-century Americans blocked the development of meaningful relations with other nations; on an individual level, they were similarly inhibiting. In both instances, psychic immaturity was the result of an inability to make contact.

Men who were strangers to one another practiced a politics of evasion. From one end of the nineteenth century to the other, Americans relied on the expansion of their society to provide painless solutions to social problems. There was no need to formulate a coherent policy to alleviate the lot of the poor, because upward mobility would automatically take care of most of them and society would be better off if the rest died. The Negro question would go away as soon as the last black buck was shipped off to the Caribbean—or would Africa be better, as Lincoln insisted? The superficiality of such ideas was breathtaking, but surely the most jejeune of them all was the claim of Northern abolitionists and Southern secessionists alike that the question of sectional antagonism could be answered by dissolving the Union.

To a degree—but only to a degree—the best writers of the century stood apart from their countrymen and from the characters in their own books. Melville, for instance, was keenly conscious of the unformed quality of the national character. At the end of his career, he presented an unforgettable portrait of American innocence in the person of Billy Budd—handsome as a baby, stutteringly inarticulate, and unable to express his anger except with a mortal blow. The author of *Typee* also knew that the dream of escaping one's own past was unattainable inasmuch as one can never escape from oneself. Other writers contributed other insights into the national enthusiasm for avoiding problems rather than confronting them. The symbolic Americans in Poe's stories have not found security in their withdrawal from the world; on the contrary, they are men at bay who are scared to death of the nameless horrors that have breached their sanctuaries. Even the sanctuary of childhood was vulnerable, as Mark Twain showed. For the mood of recaptured delight never lasts in his stories: Huck's raft gets smashed, Nigger Jim disappears, and the trip down the river turns into a nightmare. As for painless solutions to social questions, Hawthorne's satirical account of the utopian community at Blithedale effectively punctured at least one secessionist bubble.

Yet the leading writers of nineteenth-century America were not so much the critics as the creatures of their civilization. From the yearnings of Washington Irving to lose himself in a land of dreams to Henry James's expatriation, their secessionist fantasies were only variations on a national theme, and emotional detachment from the world around them had as crippling an effect on their personalities as on their countrymen's. To discover as much meaning in family life as Tolstoy did, or to implicate their characters in social settings to the extent that Balzac and Zola did, was simply beyond the psychic capacity of the American writer. Henry James, for instance, not only failed in his Balzacian ambition to become the secretary of American society, but he experienced extreme difficulty in dramatizing relationships between individuals. Thus in *The Portrait of a Lady* he reduced the married life of Gilbert Osmond and Isabel Archer to a series of frozen postures that are even more devoid of human reality than Cooper's portrait of Natty Bumppo as an old man, and his attempt to persuade us that Isabel really cares for Osmond's young daughter is literary fakery, nothing more.

Working within a narrow range of experience, a half dozen minor writers of the period showed a much more consistent willingness to confront the ordinary problems of adulthood than the major writers did. The fact that most of these writers were women is striking, but not hard to understand. It was, after all, much more difficult for women than for men in nineteenth-century America to convince themselves that someday they would throw over their responsibilities and walk out, slamming the door behind them. Women had fewer rights, fewer opportunities, fewer choices of any sort than men did. Family life and community life enveloped them; perforce, they stayed put, while the whole world celebrated the freedom and openness of American society. Their situation may have been frustrating and often depressing, but it seems to have saved many of them from the prevailing immaturity of their times. If literature is a reflection of life, then nineteenth-century American women were markedly more "adult" than their men, as Hawthorne suggested when he contrasted Hester Prynne's behavior with the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale's.

The serious female writers who emerged in the middle and later decades of the century—I am thinking not only of Kate Chopin and Sarah Orne Jewett, whom I have already mentioned, but of Harriet Beecher Stowe and Mary Wilkins Freeman—did not traffic in the disappearing acts that are a childish literature's stock in trade. Instead, they involved their characters in webs of social circumstance and watched them struggle. In bits and pieces, a drastically incomplete, but nevertheless significant, picture of adult life emerged from their books. Eventually Willa Cather would model her pioneer heroines on the indomitable women whom Stowe and Jewett had portrayed, and Edith Wharton would amplify the theme of female entrapment that Chopin had adumbrated in *The Awakening*.

At the end of the 1890s, Theodore Dreiser also began to deal with adult themes. The first American novelist of any significance who had neither a middle-class nor an "old American" background, Dreiser looked at life from a much more skeptical perspective than his predecessors had. But *Sister Carrie* (1900) was not merely a personal testament. It also reflected the disillusioning events of the decade in which it was conceived. For a hundred years, citizens of the United States had cherished assumptions about the opportunities their society provided, but in the nineties those assumptions were suddenly called into question by a number of stunning developments, the most

notable of which were the disappearance of the frontier, the rise of the trusts, and the outbreak of a series of bloody industrial strikes. The publication of *Sister Carrie* marked the beginning of a new theme in American literature—modern society was a trap from which no one, male or female, could possibly escape. Through the bitter story of George Hurstwood, the Chicago saloon manager, who at the outset of the novel dazzles the inexperienced Carrie Meeber with his suavity and his success, but whose life ends in suicide in a Bowery flophouse, Dreiser provided a vision of modern American adulthood that Saul Bellow's Herzog might very well have had in mind when he was musing about the subject some sixty years later:

Well, for instance, what it means to be a man. In a city. In transition. In a mass. Transformed by science. Under organized power. Subject to tremendous controls. In a condition caused by mechanization. . . . In a society that was no community and devalued the person. Owing to the multiplied power of numbers which made the self negligible.⁸

Nevertheless, the immaturity of American literature did not end with Dreiser's massive assault upon it. The child hero, to be sure, did not last much beyond Booth Tarkington's *Penrod* (1914), but his place was soon taken by the sad-faced postadolescents of *The Sun Also Rises* and *The Great Gatsby*. The concept of adolescence had been formalized by G. Stanley Hall in 1904, and Hemingway and Fitzgerald had come of age (which is different from growing up) in an America that had fallen in love with a new view of the human life cycle. The Census Bureau may have announced in 1890 that the nation no longer had a frontier, but the old American dream of escaping from reality was not dead, after all. The escape routes that "nature's nation" no longer offered would now be supplied through human nature. By the 1920s, Stanley Hall's soberly scientific insistence that we pay attention to the "storm and stress" of adolescence had been transmogrified in the popular mind into a cult of youth.

Hall had warned that adolescence was a waiting period that must not be arbitrarily foreshortened; it should be allowed, he said, to run its full natural course. But Hemingway and Fitzgerald carried this further: in their early work they revealed that the waiting period could be prolonged more or less indefinitely. This revelation appealed not only to readers of their own age, but to somewhat younger readers as well. Just as the emotionally childish works of Cooper's

generation were appropriated by twelve-year-olds, so the emotionally adolescent stories of Hemingway and Fitzgerald were quickly picked up by high school and college students; since the paperback revolution of the early 1950s, in fact, youthful readers have almost surely been their most important constituency.

For teenage Americans, reading Hemingway has become a kind of initiation rite. How to make out in a sleeping bag or a gondola or simply under the trees by a Michigan lake; what to order when you go to the Brasserie Lipp (try the *pommes à l'huile*), and where you should try to get seated; why a twenty-to-one martini is called a Montgomery, and who used to make the best daiquiris in Havana: his books contain the answers to all sorts of questions like these, and the more money the neophyte reader has in his pocket, the more helpful Hemingway becomes. What salesman at Abercrombie's, after all, can tell you that you not only want a .256 Mannlicher Shoenauer, but you want the kind with the eighteen-inch barrel that the stores are not allowed to sell any more? There is, alas, a certain justice in the fact that a hotdog skier from Sun Valley has been able to parlay her grandfather's name into a million-dollar advertising deal and a well-publicized liaison with a hamburger king. In the age of consumerism, and of the youth culture that dominates it, a Hemingway endorsement sells the product.

The recent film version of *The Great Gatsby* led to tie-in sales of "Gatsby white" men's suits and kitchenware. Yet Fitzgerald's adolescent fantasies were far less tangible than Hemingway's. Like the hero of his novel, he did not believe in fancy shirts so much as he did in the masturbatory dreams they symbolized. It is Daisy's voice, not Daisy herself, that holds the dreamer. The song she sings is sad, though, for at three o'clock in the morning the party is almost over and the magic of youth is fading. Gatsby, Nick Carraway, and Tom Buchanan have all turned thirty, and *it is a terrible thing*. A youth-worshiping civilization had already decided that thirty was not a particularly happy birthday, but Fitzgerald elevated it into a major crisis. All the insistent power of his romanticism was brought to bear on the subject, until an utterly sophomoric idea became a national obsession. We shall never be able to count the times that psychoanalysts have had to listen to the anguished confession, "I am no longer in my twenties!" but we do know that in the 1960s a generation of college students who had been raised on paperback copies of *The*

Great Gatsby made their refusal to trust anyone over thirty a battle cry. How many novelists, in any age in any country, can claim to have influenced an entire nation's perception of the life cycle?

The Fitzgerald hero's conception of himself as not only beautiful but damned has become an idea that many college students entertain about themselves. Making a separate peace in the manner of Frederic Henry in *A Farewell to Arms* is the recurrent dream of prep school boys, as J. D. Salinger and other witnesses have testified. While the appeal to youth of Hemingway and Fitzgerald is perennial, they themselves eventually discovered that their fantasies were unlivable. At some point in their work, consequently, the mood suddenly shifts, and we come upon a different sort of hero. He has gangrene in his leg, a hangover that will not go away, and an oppressive sense that he has wasted time. Although he talks a lot about himself, there is a significant vacancy at the center of his story, for he has moved directly from overaged adolescence to middle-aged crack-up without ever having been mature. Despite its flashbacks, *Tender is the Night* gives us no real sense of why Dick Diver decided to go to medical school, or of the long effort that presumably went into the making of his professional reputation; the only thing the novel makes us believe in is Dick's disintegration, the principal symbol of which is the loss of his youthful ability to perform athletic tricks.

Hemingway tells us even less about the background of Thomas Hudson. Near the end of *Islands in the Stream*, Hudson nostalgically recalls his "time of innocence" in Paris, when he was starting out as a painter, but the story of how a young man actually fulfilled his artistic promise is a subject about which we learn nothing firsthand. Dreiser could portray a man at the height of his powers, and he did so again and again in the early chapters of *Sister Carrie*, in *Jennie Gerhardt*, in *The Financier*, and in *The Titan*, but Hemingway could not. In *Islands in the Stream*, all he can show us is a death-haunted alcoholic who likes boats and guns and who finally is hit in the crotch with "three chickenshit bullets" that "fuck good painting and prove nothing."⁹

Dreiser, on the one hand, versus Hemingway and Fitzgerald, on the other: American literature in the early twentieth century was torn between a willingness to confront "what it means to be a man" and a desire to postpone that confrontation as long as possible. This tension continues. It is as if an adult principle and an adolescent

principle were locked in a Manichaeian struggle for possession of our literary souls. The struggle vacillates back and forth, with some authors even divided against themselves—Saul Bellow, for example, who scorns “the cheap mental stimulants of Alienation, the cant and rant of pipsqueaks about Inauthenticity and Forlornness,” but can’t break free of them in his own books for more than two chapters at a time.¹⁰ Yet, for all its inconclusiveness, the struggle has a pattern. The adult principle certainly seems to have had the upper hand in the 1930s, when Faulkner and Steinbeck were doing their finest work, whereas in the 1960s, when Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., was presiding over the greening of America and Norman Mailer was substituting unzipped exposures of himself for the novels he could not write, the adolescent principle was once more in the ascendancy. These psychic shifts are not accidental, but are related to historical events. Just as *Sister Carrie* emerged out of a socially upsetting decade, so *Absalom, Absalom!* and *The Grapes of Wrath* were products of the Great Depression; conversely, Vonnegut became a cult figure, as Fitzgerald had before him, in an age of unprecedented prosperity.

In the mid-1970s, the mood of the nation has darkened again. One has the sense that the United States—indeed, the whole world—is waiting, waiting, waiting for catastrophe. As our fear deepens, we turn to history and to family life, as Faulkner and Steinbeck did, and watch *Upstairs, Downstairs* on the tube. Even Jerry Rubin has published a book called *Growing (Up) at Thirty-Seven*. But, as his parentheses indicate, the erstwhile clown-prince of the sixties is still not sure whether he is joking or not. In any event, American literature is not likely to become completely serious until, in Kierkegaard’s words, we have known hell through and through.

ENDNOTES

¹D. H. Lawrence, “Studies in Classic American Literature,” in *The Shock of Recognition*, ed. Edmund Wilson (Garden City, N.Y., 1943), 907.

²A good many authors in early-nineteenth-century Great Britain, most notably Dickens and Scott, also appealed to readers of all ages. But many other writers, for example, Jane Austen, were completely lost on young children. A similarly mixed situation existed on the Continent. Only in America did all the major writers of fiction command the attention of juvenile as well as adult readers.

³James Fenimore Cooper, *The Prairie*, ed. Henry Nash Smith (New York, 1955), 8, 9, 11, 22–23, 26, 33, 63, 67, 85, 224, 231, 445–47.

⁴Leslie A. Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel* (New York, 1960).

⁵Washington Irving, *The Sketch Book*, with an afterword by Perry Miller (New York, 1961), 41–53.

⁶Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*, ed. Sherman Paul (Boston, 1957), 40–41, 141–42, 227.

⁷Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*, introduction by Austin Warren (New York, 1954), 250.

⁸Saul Bellow, *Herzog* (New York, 1964), 201.

⁹Ernest Hemingway, *Islands in the Stream* (New York, 1970), 464.

¹⁰Bellow, *Herzog*, 75.

Lewis Thomas, M.D.

On the Science and Technology of Medicine

THE COMMON THEME RUNNING THROUGH ALMOST ALL the criticisms leveled at the American health-care system these days is the charge of inadequacy or insufficiency. There are not enough doctors and nurses, and those around lack sufficient interest and compassion; there are not enough clinics, and those around lack sufficient time to see everyone; there are too few medical schools, medical centers, and specialized hospitals, with inequities in their distribution around the country; most of all, there is not enough money, not enough commitment.

And yet, the system has been expanding with explosive force in the last quarter century. It has been nothing short of a boom. In 1950, the total national expenditure in health care was estimated at \$10 billion. By 1972, it had risen to over \$70 billion. In 1974, it was \$110 billion. This year it will at least exceed \$130 billion, and it will be still larger if a national health-insurance program emerges. According to some more or less official estimates, it could exceed \$250 billion by the 1980s.

Whatever the defects, it cannot be claimed that the nation has been failing to react. Any enterprise that amplifies itself over a twenty-five-year period in this exuberant fashion is surely making a try. It is, whatever else, a massive effort to improve.

The question is: What are we improving? What, in fact, have we been trying to accomplish with these vast sums?

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An alien historian would think, from a look just at the dollar figures for each of those years, that some sort of tremendous event must have been occurring since 1950. Either (1) the health of the nation had suddenly disintegrated, requiring the laying on of new resources to meet the crisis, or (2) the technology for handling health problems had undergone a major transformation, necessitating the installation of new effective resources to do things that could not be done before, or (3), another possibility, perhaps we had somehow been caught up in the momentum of a huge, collective, ponderous set of errors. If any of these explanations is the right one, we ought at least to become aware of it, since whatever we are improving will involve, in the near future, an even more immense new bureaucracy, an even larger commitment of public funds, regulations that will intervene in every aspect of the citizen's life, and, inevitably, still more expansion. This paper will deal with the arguments around each of these three possible explanations.

THE HEALTH OF THE NATION, 1950-1975

There is, to begin with, no real evidence that health has deteriorated in this country, certainly not to the extent indicated by the new dollars spent each year for health care. On the contrary, we seem to have gotten along reasonably well.

There is perhaps more heart disease, but this is to be expected in a generally older population living beyond the life expectancy of fifty years ago. Heart disease is, after all, one of the ways of dying, and death certificates do not usually distinguish between heart failure as the result of time having run out and other forms of heart disease, except by noting age. The total numbers have increased somewhat, and perhaps there are also somewhat more cases of coronary occlusion in middle-aged men, but we have not suddenly been plagued, just since 1950, by new heart disease in anything like frightening numbers.

Cancer, stroke, kidney disease, arthritis, schizophrenia, cirrhosis, multiple sclerosis, senility, asthma, pulmonary fibrosis, and a few other major diseases are still with us, but the change in incidence per capita is not sufficient to account for the move from a \$10 billion enterprise to a \$130 billion one.

Aging is not in itself a health problem, although a larger number of surviving old people obviously means proportionately more people with the disabling illnesses characteristic of the aged. However, the increased number of such patients since 1950 is not great enough to account for much of the increased investment.

Meanwhile, there has been a general improvement in the public health with respect to certain infectious diseases which were major problems in the twenty-five-year period prior to 1950. Lobar pneumonia, scarlet fever, erysipelas, rheumatic fever, subacute bacterial endocarditis, typhoid fever, poliomyelitis, diphtheria, pertussis, meningococcal meningitis, staphylococcal septicemia, all of which filled the wards of municipal and county hospitals in the earlier period, have become rarities. To be sure, new sorts of bacterial infection have appeared in hospital communities, as complications of other therapy in most instances, but the total number of these is a small figure alongside the infectious diseases of the pre-antibiotic, pre-immunization period.

On balance, then, no case can be made for a wave of new illnesses afflicting our population in the years since 1950. If anything, we are probably a somewhat healthier people because of the sharp decrease in severe infectious disease.

But this is not the general view of things: the public perception of the public health, in 1975, appears to be quite different. There is now a much more acute awareness of the risk of disease than in earlier periods, associated with a greater apprehension that a minor illness may turn suddenly into a killing disease. There is certainly a higher expectation that all kinds of disease can be treated effectively. Finally, personal maladjustments of all varieties—unhappiness, discontent, fear, anxiety, despair, marital discord, even educational problems—have come to be regarded as medical problems, requiring medical attention, imposing new, heavy demands for care. In addition, there are probably many more people in this country requiring specialized rehabilitation services for disabilities resulting from physical trauma (Korea and Vietnam veterans, automobile- and industrial-accident victims, etc.).

HEALTH-CARE TECHNOLOGY, 1950-1975

Has the effective technology for medical care changed in the past twenty-five years to a degree sufficient to explain the increased cost? Is there in fact a new high technology of medicine?

Despite the widespread public impression that this is the case, there is little evidence for it. The most spectacular technological change has occurred in the management of infectious disease, but its essential features had been solidly established and put to use well before 1950. The sulfonamides came to medicine in the late 1930s, penicillin and streptomycin a few years later, and the major advances in the control and cure of infectious disease occurred during the 1940s. There has been no quantum leap in anti-infectious technology since 1950. Several new virus vaccines have been developed. The antibiotics have come into more widespread use (probably with considerable overuse and waste); a multiplicity of new variants of antibiotics and chemotherapeutic agents has appeared on the market, but one would not expect that the rational use of this technology, even allowing for the high cost of development and marketing, would have proven to be anything like the previous cost of hospital care in the absence of such a technology. A typical case of lobar pneumonia, pre-antibiotic, involved three or four weeks of hospitalization; typhoid was a twelve-to-sixteen-week illness; meningitis often required several months of care through convalescence; these and other common infectious diseases can now be aborted promptly, within just a few days. The net result of the anti-infection technology ought to have been a very large decrease in the cost of care.

There have been a few other examples of technology improvement, comparable in decisive effectiveness, since 1950, but the best of these have been for relatively uncommon illnesses. Childhood leukemia and certain solid tumors in children, for example, can now be cured by chemotherapy in a substantial proportion of cases, but there are only a few thousand of these per year in the country. Endocrine-replacement therapy has become highly effective and relatively inexpensive ("relative" considering the cost of caring for untreated endocrine abnormalities) for a variety of disorders involving the adrenals, pituitary, parathyroid, ovary, and thyroid; in particular, the biochemical treatment of thyroid dysfunction has improved markedly. Hematology has offered new and effective replacement treatment for certain anemias. Immunologic prophylaxis now prevents most cases of hemolytic disease of the newborn. Progress in anesthesia, electrolyte physiology, and cardiopulmonary physiology has greatly advanced the field of surgery, so that reparative and other procedures can now be done which formerly were technically impossible.

But the list of decisive new accomplishments is not much longer than the contents of the above paragraph.

We are left with approximately the same roster of common major diseases which confronted the country in 1950, and although we have accumulated a formidable body of information about some of them in the intervening time, the accumulation is not yet sufficient to permit either the prevention or the outright cure of any of them. This is not to suggest that progress has not been made, or has been made more slowly than should reasonably have been expected. On the contrary, the research activity since 1950 has provided the beginnings of insight into the underlying processes in several of our most important diseases, and there is every reason for optimism regarding the future. But it is the present that is the problem. We are, in a sense, partway along, maybe halfway along. At the same time, medicine is expected to do something for each of these illnesses, to do whatever can be done in the light of today's knowledge. Because of this obligation, we have evolved "halfway" technologies, representing the best available treatment, and the development and proliferation of these are partly responsible for the escalating costs of health care in recent years. Associated with this expansion, the diagnostic laboratories have become much more elaborate and complex in their technologies; there is no question that clinical diagnosis has become much more powerful and precise, but at a very high cost and with considerable waste resulting from overuse.

This way of looking at contemporary medicine runs against the currently general public view that the discipline has by this time come almost its full distance, that we have had a long succession of "breakthroughs" and "major advances," and that now we should go beyond our persistent concern with research on what is called curative medicine and give more attention to the social aspects of illness and to preventive medicine.

It does not, in fact, look much like the record of a completed job, or even of a job more than half begun, when you run through the list, one by one, of the diseases in this country which everyone will agree are the most important ones. A handy index for this sort of exercise is the annual *United States Vital Statistics Report*, in which are tabulated the ten leading causes of death, as well as the commonest nonfatal illnesses requiring attention from the health-care system.

The questions to be asked are the following: For how many of these illnesses do we now possess a decisively effective technology for cure or prevention, directed at a central disease agent or mechanism, comparable to the treatment, say, of pneumococcal lobar pneumonia with penicillin? Are we failing to employ effective measures because of deficiencies in the health-care system? To what extent do present mortality and morbidity rates simply reflect the absence of any known technology that works?

In the following section, these questions are explored. It should be emphasized here that we will not be discussing the availability of medical treatment in general. Obviously, there is a great deal that can be done for patients with the diseases considered below in the way of supportive care, the amelioration of symptoms, and sometimes the extension of life. In some conditions, this amounts to what might be called partial control of the disease, but this is not the question at hand. What we are examining here is the capacity of medicine to cure outright or to prevent completely—in situations analogous to lobar pneumonia or poliomyelitis.

Listed below are the ten leading causes of death from disease in the United States in 1974:

Cardiovascular disease (39% of total deaths in 1974): In general, cardiovascular disease lacks any decisive, conclusive technology with the power to turn off, reverse, or prevent disease. There are two possible exceptions: rheumatic heart disease is known to be preventable when the antecedent streptococcal infection can be quickly terminated by early antibiotic treatment or prevented by prophylaxis; some forms of congenital heart disease can be completely corrected by surgery. Except for these, the other therapies now available are directed at secondary results of already established disease: coronary-care units and specialized ambulances, designed primarily for coping with cardiac standstill and arrhythmias, anticoagulant treatment to prevent extension and recurrence (largely given up in recent years), digitalis and diuretics for myocardial failure, drug therapy to inhibit arrhythmias, and surgical replacement of already damaged coronary arteries or valves.

As to coronary disease, it is believed in some quarters that dietary lipids are an etiologic factor. It is also proposed that lack of exercise,

excessive emotional stress, and various usually unstipulated environmental influences are somehow implicated in pathogenesis. The evidence for these beliefs is still inconclusive. In any event, intervention to correct them would involve grand-scale, societal reforms of living habits. Meanwhile, the actual pathologic events which cause the coronary lesions remain unknown. Until these are elucidated in some detail, a direct approach to coronary disease must await the future.

Hypertension is a separate disease state, frequently associated with cardiac disease. This will be considered below.

Cancer (19% of total deaths in 1974): Up to now, the technologies available for the treatment of cancer are all in the "halfway" category, in the sense that they deal with the already established disease and represent efforts to destroy, by one means or another (surgery, radiation, chemotherapy, immunotherapy), existing cancer cells. There are no methods for reversing the neoplastic process in cells or for preventing their emergence from normal cells. Prevention would be possible for a few types, if exposure to the known environmental carcinogens, e.g., cigarettes, asbestos, and certain industrial chemicals, could be eliminated. But prevention in the sense of eliminating the biological steps involved in the transformation of cells is not yet feasible.

Cerebrovascular diseases (11% of total deaths in 1974): Stroke results from disease of the arteries of the brain, usually associated with atherosclerosis or hypertension. Since no therapy exists for preventing or reversing atherosclerosis, this class of strokes is neither preventable nor reversible. Hypertension is considered below.

Once stroke occurs, therapy is limited to efforts at minimizing the extent of disability, largely a matter of retraining, rehabilitation, and speech therapy. No treatment exists for preventing the recurrence of stroke. Anticoagulant therapy, once attempted on a large scale, is no longer in general use.

Kidney disease (10.4% of total deaths in 1974): The major forms of kidney disease responsible for most cases of renal failure and death are chronic glomerulonephritis and pyelonephritis.

At the present time, no effective treatment exists for chronic glomerulonephritis beyond measures aimed at compensating for the loss of renal function, e.g., electrolyte adjustment, chronic dialysis, and in a relatively few cases, kidney transplantation. Some cases are perhaps prevented by early treatment of antecedent streptococcal

infection, but the initial cause in most instances is unknown. The essential lesion is a deposit of an antigen-antibody complex within the walls of glomerular capillaries, followed by injury to the vessels probably mediated by leucocytic lysosomes and complement. A direct therapeutic approach to these events cannot be conceived until more detailed scientific information becomes available.

Chronic pyelonephritis can probably be prevented in some instances by early treatment of the acute infection, but in most cases the kidney lesions develop gradually and unobtrusively, and once established, they are not reversible. It is believed by some that bacterial protoplasts are involved in etiology, perhaps also with an associated immunologic injury to the tissues; even if this is so, currently available antimicrobial therapy is not effective.

Pulmonary disease (approximately 4.5% of total deaths in 1974): Included under this heading, in the *Vital Statistics Report*, are influenza, pneumonia, bronchitis, emphysema, and chronic obstructive lung disease.

Almost all cases of primary bacterial and mycoplasmal pneumonia are treatable and curable by use of the appropriate antibiotic.

Influenza can be prevented in some cases by immunization, provided the antigenic strain is recognized early enough in an outbreak to prepare vaccine. Once it has occurred, there is no therapy for the influenza viral infection itself. Bacterial superinfections, when they occur, are reversible except in the occasional cases of sudden, overwhelming infection to which pregnant women and debilitated elderly people are most prone. Antibiotic treatment of uncomplicated influenza is ineffective and probably hazardous.

Bronchitis, emphysema, and chronic pulmonary obstructive disease are still unsolved etiologic problems. Cigarette smoking and air pollution are suspected as causes, but the actual mechanisms underlying the injury to lung tissue remain unknown. Although technologies exist for the improvement of aeration by the damaged lungs, and thus for some prolongation of life, there are no measures available for stopping or reversing the progress of disease.

Diabetes mellitus (1.9% of total deaths in 1974): Although the discovery of insulin fifty years ago made possible the survival of most diabetics who would otherwise have died in diabetic coma, the blood-vessel disorder which is a major aspect of the disease is unaffected by insulin and remains a mystery. Hence, the disabilities

and deaths of diabetics, mostly in middle age and later, are now due to chronic kidney disease and the occlusion of arteries in one or another part of the body. Virtually nothing is known about the cause of vascular lesions, and there is no therapy to stop or reverse the process.

Cirrhosis of the liver (1.8% of total deaths in 1974): The chief cause of cirrhosis is unquestionably alcohol taken in excess and over a long period of time. If alcoholism could be prevented, cirrhosis would become a relatively rare affliction. The hepatic lesions are to some extent reversible, and the disease can sometimes be stopped and even reversed in its early stages by simple abstention.

This, however, represents about the total of today's effective therapy. The mechanism of hepatic cell injury by alcohol is not understood, nor is the process by which the liver becomes progressively atrophic and fibrosed. Nutritional deprivation, believed a few years back to play a central role, is no longer thought to be centrally involved. Once the disease is firmly established, there is no known method for turning it around. Surgical measures have been developed for reducing ascites (that is, fluid accumulation in the abdomen) and the back pressure of portal blood, with some ameliorative effort on the symptoms of cirrhosis, but the injury to the liver itself is unalterable.

Perinatal disease (1.5% of total deaths in 1974): Much of the infant mortality in the earliest days of life is associated with prematurity, and obstructive disease of the lungs accounts for much of this. At the present time, there is no effective therapy for this pulmonary disease, caused by hyaline, membranous deposits which occlude the alveolar walls. The mechanisms leading to these deposits are unknown.

Bacterial and viral infections account for a majority of other neonatal deaths. The bacterial infections are treatable with antibiotics, but often occur abruptly in overwhelming form. The viral infections are untreatable.

Hemolytic disease of the newborn, formerly a common cause of death, is now preventable by immunologic treatment during pregnancy; some cases can be cured by total blood replacement and transfusions.

Congenital malformations and deficiencies (0.7% of total deaths in 1974): Although surgical measures are available for the correction of

some types of congenital malformation, such as cardiac and intestinal anomalies, most of them are untreatable. A few of the highly disabling and fatal enzyme deficiencies can be recognized during early pregnancy and thus prevented by abortion. The biochemical and genetic nature of these rare disorders is currently under investigation in many laboratories, and there is some optimism that methods for reversing the defects will eventually be found.

Peptic ulcer: Few human ailments have been subjected to as great a variety of medical and surgical treatments over the years as peptic ulcer, often with enthusiastic predictions of success, but always replaced by new and different therapies. The main problem hampering decisive progress is that the mechanism that produces peptic ulcers is not understood, and therefore there is no basis for devising a genuinely rational method of treatment or prevention. This is not to say that it is not a treatable condition, of course. There are many ways in which the symptoms and the progress of the disease can be alleviated. Nevertheless, it must be ranked as an essentially unexplained disorder.

The foregoing list accounts for approximately 80 percent of all deaths in this country. It does not, of course, account for the major part of the work of physicians, nor the greatest element of cost for the health-care system. We are afflicted, obviously, by a great (but it must be said, finite) array of nonfatal illnesses varying in severity and duration, and it is here that the greatest demands for technology are made. For the purposes of this paper, some of the commonest of these self-limited or nonfatal diseases are listed below:

Acute respiratory infections: These and the acute gastroenteric infections and intoxications (see below) make up the great majority of transiently disabling illnesses with which people are afflicted in a year's turning.

The common cold and the array of other respiratory viral infections including influenza (sometimes called gripe) are essentially untreatable. The measures employed for alleviating discomfort—bed rest, aspirin, a good book—are no different today from what one's grandmother would have prescribed. There is, in short, no medical technology for such illnesses. The administration of antibiotics,

antihistamines, vitamin C, and various other "cold remedies" probably have no effect other than reassurance. There is a general apprehension that such illnesses may lead to other, more severe, respiratory infections, such as pneumonia, if not monitored by a physician, but there is in fact no evidence for this. By and large, people with these illnesses get better by themselves, usually within a day or two. The most frequent complications are the result of untoward reactions to unnecessary therapy, most often the antibiotics used in the hope of preventing complications.

Gastrointestinal infections: The general run of acute gastrointestinal illnesses, usually caused by a virus or salmonella infection or by staphylococcal toxin, are common, self-limited, and entirely without hazard. Intervention by medicine would be desirable, since these are unpleasant experiences for the afflicted, and there are in fact several symptomatic measures for partial relief, but the illnesses are usually so short in duration that no therapy is necessary. As in the case of acute respiratory infections, grandmother's advice is as good as any, maybe better.

Arthritis: Both rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis, which account for more than 5 million illnesses each year, are unexplained, mystifying diseases for which no therapy beyond analgesic drugs is available. Rheumatoid arthritis is currently believed by a consensus of clinical investigators to be caused by an unknown infectious agent, probably with a still unidentified immunopathologic component. The partial relief provided by salicylates and related drugs, and by gold salts, are still unexplainable. In approximately 35 percent of all cases the disease subsides spontaneously and vanishes. Prolonged, chronically disabling forms of arthritis can be partially benefited by surgical removal of inflamed synovial (joint) tissues. Prolonged hospitalization and various forms of rehabilitative care are required in some cases. In the absence of information concerning etiology, it is probable that treatment will remain at a symptomatic, empirical level not very different from the measures of fifty years ago.

Osteoarthritis remains totally unexplained. Surgical treatment is useful in some (notably hip) cases; otherwise therapy is limited to analgesic drugs.

The neuroses: It is frequently said that at least 75 percent of the patients seeking help in doctors' offices or clinics have complaints for which there is no "organic" explanation. Some of these patients are not

really ill, but simply in need of reassurance that they do not have one or another disease which they are worried about. Others are beset by family, economic, or various other social problems which seem temporarily insoluble, and for which they seek advice. Still others, an unknown number, are disabled by classical psychoneuroses.

The possible therapeutic approaches to such problems have not changed significantly in the past quarter century. Counseling, comforting, and what is called psychotherapy are essentially the same procedures as in earlier times, without any real elements of technology; nor is there any statistical evidence for their effectiveness. An immense store of so-called tranquilizer drugs has been provided by pharmaceutical research in recent years, but there is little information about the efficacy of its contents. They may provide transient symptomatic relief, but it is unlikely that they alter the underlying processes of these illnesses. In short, there is no real technology available for the treatment of "functional" illness, psychoneurosis, or the various forms of social maladaptation. It seems safe to say that nothing much has happened since 1950 to alter the situation one way or the other.

The psychoses: Schizophrenia and the manic-depressive psychoses account for the greatest part of mental illness requiring hospitalization and prolonged ambulatory care. Drug therapy evolved since 1950 has greatly improved the "manageability" of schizophrenia, but it has not much changed the disease itself. The manic-depressive psychoses are improved in some instances by pharmacologic treatment, including lithium, and also in some by electric shock. All forms of psychosis remain unexplained, however, in terms of identifiable mechanisms attributable to dysfunction in the central nervous system, and therapy directed at underlying processes has not advanced beyond what was available before 1950.

Parkinsonism: The introduction of L-Dopa as therapy for Parkinsonism in the mid-1960s by Cotzias and his associates represents a milestone in neurological medicine. Although not all patients are uniformly benefited and some become refractory or display untoward reactions to the drug, many do well and have their lives transformed.

Essential hypertension: In some respects, hypertension is a paradigm illustrating a central dilemma in today's health-care system. Drugs are now available with the capacity to reduce blood-pressure levels to normal. At the same time, however, the actual mechanisms

of the disease remain without explanation, and it is not yet known whether the reduction of blood pressure has any effect on the underlying vascular disturbance. There is now some evidence, still incomplete, that prolonged treatment with antihypertensive drugs decreases the incidence of stroke as a complication of hypertension. There may also be an effect on the incidence of coronary occlusion, although the evidence for this is less conclusive. There appears to be no doubt that drug treatment can prolong survival in patients with malignant hypertension.

On the basis of these observations, it has been proposed that large-scale screening programs be set up, so that all of the 10 million or more young, potentially vulnerable people with hypertension in this country can be identified and treated. This means that great numbers of patients with essential hypertension will be placed on lifelong treatment with complex pharmacologic agents, necessarily persuaded to stay under treatment because of the threat of a fatal outcome. At the same time it is a certainty that many patients with essential hypertension, if not treated, would nevertheless be able to look forward to the statistical probability of a normal life span. Indeed, there are reasons to believe that essential hypertension is a normal state of affairs for some people. The difficulty is that there is no way to predict which patients will eventually have cardiac, cerebral, or renal complications associated with hypertension; in the absence of such knowledge, all hypertensives must be treated. Meanwhile, the disease itself remains an enigma. If a mass screening and therapy program is launched, it will be done in the hope that treating a symptom of disease will have long-range beneficial effects. Moreover, it will involve drug therapy, with certain predictable side effects, and perhaps still others unpredicted thus far, aimed at the protection of a minority of the patients to be treated.

THE COST OF WORRY IN THE HEALTH-CARE SYSTEM

Nothing has changed so much in the health-care system over the past twenty-five years as the public's perception of its own health. The change amounts to a loss of confidence in the human form. The general belief these days seems to be that the body is fundamentally flawed, subject to disintegration at any moment, always on the verge of mortal disease, always in need of continual monitoring and

support by health-care professionals. This is a new phenomenon in our society.

It can be seen most clearly in the content of television programs and, especially, television commercials, where the preponderance of material deals with the need for shoring up one's personal health. The same drift is evident in the contents of the most popular magazines and in the health columns of daily newspapers. There is a public preoccupation with disease that is assuming the dimension of a national obsession.

To some extent, the propaganda which feeds the obsession is a result of the well-intentioned efforts by particular disease agencies to obtain public money for the support of research and care in their special fields. Every mail brings word of the imminent perils posed by multiple sclerosis, kidney disease, cancer, heart disease, cystic fibrosis, asthma, muscular dystrophy, and the rest.

There is, regrettably, no discernible counterpropaganda. No agencies exist for the celebration of the plain fact that most people are, in real life, abundantly healthy. No one takes public note of the truth of the matter, which is that most people in this country have a clear, unimpeded run at a longer lifetime than could have been foreseen by any earlier generation. Even the proponents of good hygiene, who argue publicly in favor of regular exercise, thinness, and abstinence from cigarettes and alcohol, base their arguments on the presumed intrinsic fallibility of human health. Left alone, unadvised by professionals, the tendency of the human body is perceived as prone to steady failure.

Underlying this pessimistic view of health is a profound dissatisfaction with the fact of death. Dying is regarded as the ultimate failure, something that could always be avoided or averted if only the health-care system functioned more efficiently. Death has been made to seem unnatural, an outrage; when people die—at whatever age—we speak of them as having been “struck down,” “felled.” It is as though in a better world we would all go on forever.

It is not surprising that all this propaganda has imposed heavy, unsupportable demands on the health-care system. If people are educated to believe that they may at any moment be afflicted with one or another mortal disease and that this fate can be forestalled by access to medicine, especially “preventive” medicine, it is no wonder that clinics and doctors' offices are filled with waiting clients.

In the year 1974, 1,933,000 people died in the United States, a death rate of 9.1 per 1,000, or just under 1 percent of the whole population, substantially lower than the birthrate for the same year. The life expectation for the whole population rose to seventy-two years, the highest expectancy ever attained in this country. With figures like these, it is hard to see health as a crisis, or the health-care system, apart from its huge size and high cost, as a matter needing emergency action. We really are a quite healthy society, and we should be spending more time and energy in acknowledging this, and perhaps trying to understand more clearly why it is so. We are in some danger of becoming a nation of healthy hypochondriacs.

For all its obvious defects and shortcomings, the actual technology of health care is not likely to be changed drastically in the direction of saving money—not in the short haul. Nor is it likely that changes for the better, in the sense of greater effectiveness and efficiency, can be brought about by any means other than more scientific research. The latter course, although sure, is undeniably slow and unpredictable. While it is a certainty, in my view, that rheumatoid arthritis, atherosclerosis, cancer, and senile dementia will eventually be demystified and can then become preventable disorders, there is no way of forecasting when this will happen; it could be a few years away for one or the other, or decades.

Meanwhile, we will be compelled to live with the system as we have it, changing only the parts that are in fact changeable. It is not likely that money problems can induce anyone—the professionals or the public at large, or even the third-party payers—to give up the halfway technologies that work only partially when this would mean leaving no therapeutic effort at all in place. For as long as there is a prospect of saving the lives of 50 percent, or even only 33 percent, of patients with cancer by today's methods for destroying cancer cells, these methods must obviously be held onto and made available to as many patients as possible. If coronary bypass surgery remains the only technical measure for relieving untractable angina in a relatively small proportion of cases, it will be continued, and very likely extended to larger numbers of cases, until something better turns up. People with incapacitating mental illness cannot simply be left to wander the streets, and we will continue to need expanding clinics and specialized hospital facilities, even though caring for the mentally ill does not mean anything like curing them. We are, in a sense, stuck

with today's technology, and we will stay stuck until we have more scientific knowledge to work with.

But what we might do, if we could muster the energy and judgment for it, is to identify the areas of health care in which the spending of money represents outright waste, and then eliminate these. There are discrete examples all over the place, but what they are depends on who is responsible for citing them, and there will be bitter arguments over each one before they can be edited out of the system, one by one.

The biggest source of waste results from the general public conviction that contemporary medicine is able to accomplish a great deal more than is in fact possible. This attitude is in part the outcome of overstated claims on the part of medicine itself in recent decades, plus medicine's passive acquiescence while even more exaggerated claims were made by the media. The notion of preventive medicine as a whole new discipline in medical care is an example of this. There is an arguably solid base for the prevention of certain diseases, but it has not changed all that much since the 1950s. A few valuable measures have been added, most notably the avoidance of cigarette smoking for the prevention of lung cancer; if we had figured out a way of acting on this single bit of information, we might have achieved a spectacular triumph in the prevention of deaths from cancer, but regrettably we didn't. The same despairing thing can be said for the preventability of death from alcohol.

But there is not much more than this in the field of preventive medicine. The truth is that medicine has not become very skilled at disease prevention—not, as is sometimes claimed, because it doesn't want to or isn't interested, but because the needed information is still lacking.

Most conspicuous and costly of all are the benefits presumed to derive from "seeing the doctor." The regular complete checkup, once a year or more often, has become a cultural habit, and it is only recently that some investigators have suggested, cautiously, that it probably doesn't do much good. There are very few diseases in which early detection can lead to a significant alteration of the outcome: glaucoma, cervical cancer, and possibly breast cancer are the usually cited examples, but in any event these do not require the full, expensive array of the complete periodic checkup, EKG and all. Nevertheless, the habit has become fixed in our society, and it is a significant item in the total bill for health care.

"Seeing the doctor" also includes an overwhelming demand for reassurance. Transient upper-respiratory infections and episodes of gastroenteritis account for most of the calls on a doctor because of illness, and an even greater number of calls are made by people who have nothing at all the matter with them. It is often claimed that these are mostly unhappy individuals, suffering from psychoneuroses, in need of compassionate listening on the part of the physician, but a large number of patients who find themselves in doctors' offices or hospital clinics will acknowledge themselves to be in entirely good health; they are there because of a previous appointment in connection with an earlier illness, for a "checkup," or for a laboratory test, or simply for reassurance that they are not coming down with something serious—cancer or heart disease or whatever. Or they may have come to the doctor for advice about living: What should their diet be? Should they take a vacation? What about a tranquilizer for everyone's inevitable moments of agitation and despair? I know a professor of pediatrics who has received visits from intelligent, well-educated parents who only want to know if their child should start Sunday school.

The system is being overused, swamped by expectant overdemand for services that are frequently trivial or unproductive. The public is not sufficiently informed of the facts about things that medicine can and cannot accomplish. Medicine is surely not in possession of special wisdom about how to live a life.

It needs to be said more often that human beings are fundamentally tough, resilient animals, marvelously made, most of the time capable of getting along quite well on their own. The health-care system should be designed for use when it is really needed and when it has something of genuine value to offer. If designed, or redesigned, in this way, the system would function far more effectively and would probably cost very much less.

CONCLUSION

If our society wishes to be rid of the diseases, fatal and nonfatal, that plague us the most, there is really little prospect of doing so by mounting a still larger health-care system at still greater cost for delivering essentially today's kind of technology on a larger scale. We will not do so by carrying out broader programs of surveillance and

screening. The truth is that we do not yet know enough. But there is also another truth of great importance: we are learning fast. The harvest of new information from the biological revolution of the past quarter century is just now coming in, and we can probably begin now to figure out the mechanisms of major diseases which were blank mysteries a few years back as accurately and profitably as was done for the infectious diseases earlier in this century. This can be said with considerable confidence, and without risk of overpromising or raising false hopes, provided we do not set time schedules or offer dates of delivery. Sooner or later it will go this way, since clearly it can go this way. It is simply a question at this stage of events of how much we wish to invest, for the health-care system of the future, in science.

Domestic Manners

HOW ARE WE LIVING TODAY? Of course, there is no “we” except for those who address us, advise us, praise us in the round, as “the American people.” The phrase is a signal for the wary, doing as it so often does more honor to the exhorter and his plans than to those millions gathered in under the grant title.

Only the forgetful can easily ignore the duplicity practiced upon the defining imagination by the sudden obsolescence of attitudes and styles just past, styles that collapsed or scattered into fragments just as one had felt free to identify them as facts, changes, alterations of consciousness, shiftings of power or threats to power. These elements, at least at the moment of identification, had the shape of reality, of historical presence, of genuine displacements; and even though they could not be asserted as eternal, they still could not be experienced as mere historical moments soon, very soon, to be reversed or simply erased. It is with some perturbation that one has to learn again and again that the power of external forces is greater than style, stronger than fleeting attitude.

“Confidence in the future” is a peculiar phrase, although in frequent use. It is not meant to signify the mere expectation of continuing existence, but rather to signify hope—perhaps for the stock market, for relations with recalcitrant and truculent foreign countries, for our own life as a whole, or for small groups, rich or poor, protected or beleaguered, who are in need of reassurance. It

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seems to mean that it is reasonable to assume the future will not diminish rewards in some cases or that the future will augment rewards in others. Most seriously it imagines that the future will, with all its attendant inequities and surprises, remain open to the understanding and the efforts of those leaders and advisers we have grown accustomed to and from whom, given the nature of things, we have generously not asked very much. These assumptions about the future are in grave disorder and "confidence" is merely a sentiment.

There is always the question of the will to understand first and then the greater will of society to undertake even the most reasonable alleviations, for alleviations on the one hand are the cue for disgruntlements elsewhere. Lacking the will, society waits for events to which it must respond, often in a final condition of fear and crisis and anger; or, in long, drawn-out, hopelessly tangled injustices and dangerous defaults it simply waits not to respond at all. Things reveal themselves in an atmosphere of grotesque folly. The persons exploiting oil in Arab countries are the same persons theatrically throwing pound notes on the ground in London rather than on the ground of the poor of their own regions. The waste of Western capitalism is not always different, but America at least is used to the waste and looks upon reduction with alarm.

To speak of persons as the "product" of their decade, or half decade in some cases, is a severe reduction of history, and yet it has an obvious descriptive usefulness, a conversational meaning that is measured by the clear recognition others give to the terms, a recognition coming out of the very grossness of the designations.

Certain persons and certain aspects of our society appear to be a product of the 1960s. The legacy of the period is intractable morally and socially in the manner of all history and it bears the peculiar opacity of its closeness to the present—that is, the period is *experience*, and its transformation into history is somewhat a work of the subjective imagination, a work close to autobiography in the way it reenters the memory.

There is sadness and regret in the memory of the sixties. For those who reached the age of eighteen in the last years of the decade, the temptations to self-destruction were everywhere, bursting forth from what was called the counterculture. The hallucinations of LSD, deformations by drugs that lingered on in apathy, addiction, aborted

education, restlessness, the deprivations and fantasies of numerous torpid "communes," the beginnings of hysterical youth cults—this still lies there behind us, for it seems that historical rubble is no more easily disposed of than the stone and steel and concrete of misbegotten highways, shopping centers, overweening towers for habitation. For those who in the sixties were "revolutionaries," it meant hiding, police records, death, exile, the delusions of youthful power that took little account of the brutal rebukes the genuine power of society can command. It meant disillusionment with "infantile leftism," with postures that time and the sluggishness of history outmoded.

For the youth of the sixties who remained outside the general reaches of a vibrating, rebellious youth culture, the decade meant death in Vietnam, mutilation, bad dreams, drug addiction, the bad faith of corrupted authority, and, at the least, a weird and agitating confusion of values. President Carter's campaign made an effort to give voice to the youth who accommodated the sixties, those who agreed as it were and suffered, but it was disheartening to realize how little he could find to say, how vague and unreal were the consolations, the approbations. If sacrifice is not to be praised as a value based upon its objectives, the gratitude of authority is therefore bound to be mixed with shame and to come forth merely as rhetoric.

Casualties of every spiritual and personal nature lay about as the legacy of the sixties. Authorities experienced much of the decade as a form of insult and fell into a state of paranoia. It was only by accident that the paranoids were removed from the domination of the state and from the determination to corrupt all of its institutions.

On the other side, the agitated scrutiny directed in the sixties to the arrangements of society discovered many pieties and hypocrisies which had claimed the aspect of eternity but which were, in fact, merely prejudices and matters of unexamined convenience. Deeply benign and practical refusals and reversals marked the period—the questioning of unnecessary, self-serving authority in the home and in institutions, the pure hopes of the civil rights movement. Informalities of all sorts, trivial and important, could, it turned out, be more or less painlessly accepted and removed from the domain of social oppression. Tolerance of deviation, acceptance of a pluralism long ago established by ocular evidence, concern for the integrity and endurance of nature, ridicule of the endless consumption of redundant goods, personal relations, masculine presumption, the old and the

young—the mere listing of customs and tyrannies challenged in the sixties is, as Chaucer said, like “trying to catch the wind in a net.”

The children of the sixties had been brought up in the fifties and no doubt this earlier, seemingly plausible and hopeful, period floated about parent and child like an ectoplasmic memory. The fifties—they seem to have taken place on a sunny afternoon that asked nothing of you except a drifting belief in the moment and its power to satisfy: a handsome young couple, with two or three children, a station wagon, a large dog, a house and a summer house, a great deal of picnicking and camping together.

For the middle class the fifties passed in a dream, a dream in which benevolent wishes for oneself were not thought of as always hostile to the enlarging possibilities of others. The treasured child would do well in school and the psychiatrist could be summoned for the troubled. The suburbs offered the space and grass that would bless family existence. The cars and the second cars were symbols of power over one's life, as anyone can see who looks at the gleaming chariots that decorate the filthy, blasted streets of the ghettos.

The sixties seemed to grow, nationally and personally, upon the beguiling confidence of the decade just past. Wars to establish credibility are for the prosperous. Time was not slow, however, but speeded up, unreal, very much like time in the air; by the late sixties the happy child was scarcely to be distinguished as he went into his teens from the quarrelsome one. Complacent parents had, after all, expected more than they realized, more of their children and more of each other. And so a decade was only ten years. And a new year could be more like a tornado uprooting the grass than another period of growth.

But how *real* the sixties were, how dreadfully memorable the horrors, how haunting the alterations, everywhere, in feeling, in belief. Already the receding years have character, violently ambivalent, and beyond repeal. And how American, one is tempted to insist. In what way? Perhaps in the way destruction was created out of the pleasures of plenitude, assassinations out of the riveting excitements of leadership, diminishment out of a manic sense of expansiveness. What went down were people here, whole countries far away, and a few of the unnecessary follies that had been sitting in our lives, like memorial plaques on the mantelpiece.

A strange decade indeed. How is one to set a value upon the sensible pleasures of "informality" and the limited liberation of maligned groups against the slaughter of people? And what is the historical connection, finally? The connection between the rights of personal style in dress and living arrangements, the right to homosexuality, to marijuana, and the present nightmare in Cambodia? It was a terrifying decade, anarchic, brutal—and fortunately for all of us, the absolutely saving energy of a profound protest, sustained by youth and a few older allies, a protest against dehumanization, military control, political lying, and power madness. To look back on the sixties is to look straight into the scarred eye of life.

The 1970s have passed their zenith. Did they take place—this handful of years—somewhere else, in another land, inside the house, the head? Fatigue and recession, cold winters and expensive heat, resignations and disgrace. Quietism, inner peace, having their turn, as if history were a concert program, some long and some short selections, a few modern and the steady traditional. For young people, it is common to say that things have settled down. *Down* is the key: accommodation, docility, depression of spirit.

Many people are going to law school, searching, one supposes, for the little opening, the ray of sun at the mouth of the cave. It does not seem possible that what our world needs is a generation of new young lawyers. In certain respects what is being honored, at least by the approving adults, is not always the actual profession so much as the sign of a willingness to begin and to persevere to the end for a practical purpose, to memorize, to master a process without the demands for the gratifications of supreme interest at each moment along the way. Yet, out there at the end are the litigious anxieties of the corporate world to which whole young lives are to be prosperously dedicated and consumed.

Advanced studies in the humanities are another matter. They are felt to be impractical—and that means that society does not find them necessary. There are not only enough of you, it says; there are too many. To go on in the study of literature, philosophy, or history can be a personal passion, but as a profession it depends upon someone out there to teach and a supply of teachers in reasonable relation to the waiting learners. At the present time, the Ph.D.'s remind one of the fervid, superfluous clerks in Russian literature, anxious persons floating in a menacing void, waving their supererogatory diplomas. It

is not quite clear that to come to the end of one's college years is to have arrived anywhere.

The seventies have not been free of definition; even drift has its direction. Intimacy, the validation of the self in a narrow, intense relation with a few others, or one other, is seen by many thinkers as a definition of our period. Very few of those who do the naming are pleased with the turn of the wheel. It is not the activism of the sixties that is mourned by conventional commentators but rather a wish for a more aggressive, outward-looking intrusion of the individual ego into the realities of power, into concern for a material grasp of self-interest rather than the vaporous transcendence of self-absorption.

The past reclaimed as an image, the opacity of life lightened by dichotomies, the fall and the rise. Our own time: "It is the localizing of human experience, so that what is close to the immediate circumstances of life is paramount." The quotation is from Richard Sennett's ambitious book called *The Fall of the Public Man*,¹ a fall which led naturally to the elevation of private man, ourselves, and "The Tyrannies of Intimacy."

The public life, as Sennett somewhat vaguely reconstructs its lost shape, was lived out of a rich variety of experiences and acceptances largely impersonal. The life of the city was possible then; intimacy, however, lives out of a fear of the unknown and the different and allows the self to retreat, nervously, into absorption in the private. Finally, one cannot in present history know others unless he knows them in a fearful closeness, accepts them as part of the returning reassurance of looking into a mirror. It is the nature of intimacy to be unattainable, a mood trembling with anxieties and insecurities because the self is insatiable. The city, along with many other things, dies, frozen by the retreat from the public domain.

Sennett's book is an abstruse effort in cultural history, designed to reach its destination—contemporary "narcissism." Narcissism, awareness, intimacy, new consciousness—these terms appear again and again in theoretical and autobiographical descriptions of the seventies. The works are strikingly varied in quality and seriousness—the least "serious" usually being revelations and transcendencies achieved in the autobiographies, the very process of "success"

providing the despairing material of the more distant and critical theoreticians.

The self's unanchored demand for security and relief from psychological unease dominates the inhabitants of Christopher Lasch's brilliant essays on the "narcissist society." (It is part of the puzzle of current writing on the elusive present that Sennett's *reign* of private man is in many respects another way of describing Lasch's "The Waning of Private Life."² "Private life" in Lasch's work appears to represent roughly what has been called family life.) About the ubiquitous drift to narcissism, Lasch writes, "Having no hope of improving their lives in any of the ways that matter, people have convinced themselves that what matters is psychic self-improvement: getting in touch with their feelings, eating health food, taking lessons in ballet or belly dancing, immersing themselves in the wisdom of the East, jogging, learning how to 'relate,' overcoming the 'fear of pleasure.'"

The cultural analyst Philip Rieff has assumed the present under the notion of the "triumph of the therapeutic"³—the hunger for personal satisfaction that imposes upon the will the privilege or the burden of escaping painful feelings. The "therapeutic" (strangely, at times Rieff speaks of it, or to it, as "him") in the writings of the often-hectoring Rieff, means many things, among them that ideas, emotions, experiences take their moral and social value from how they make you feel. The contemporary soul escapes from anxiety, duty, orderly thought by means of therapy and by therapeutic assaults upon intellectual and social authority. All of these writers, naming the not-quite-measurable sense of the present, are different in tone and in the atmosphere of recommendation, warning, regret that is the surrounding mist of the intellectual, political, and temperamental inclination of the individual writer at his desk. There is no doubt that they all prefigure (in Rieff's case) and describe one phenomenon of the seventies—the demonic acceleration of investments in gurus, encounters, magical healings, diets, transcendencies, and transformations that compete, like varieties of aspirin, for the remission of aches of the mind and psyche.

Life at home, domestic drama, sexual warfare are part of history, and, without exegesis, the matter of fiction. Divorce statistics are little figures of decline that reveal more than mere legal possibility and fact. The numbers are rich in attitudes, assumptions, hopes, and lost

hopes. It is not necessary to seek a divorce in order to live out personally the deepest skepticisms about the future of marriage. Irony about romantic love is the inescapable soil of existence upon which both marriage and divorce grow simultaneously, shooting up in the same season like plants in the garden.

Irony represents the recognition of the shortened life of the feelings. It says that the attachment to a particular person, even the legal attachment, defines the moment or the year but is far from being the key to the future. Disruption may represent failure, but it also represents the dearest boundaries of new hopes. If we can trust fiction and film, our period is, like that of Restoration drama, *comic*.

An abundance of cynical wit and coarseness are the necessary conditions for verisimilitude about prevailing manners. In speaking of the cynical and coarse, one is not investing the words with moral outrage; they are instead descriptive. With the appearance of a large number of licentious works by women, even the cuckold has returned as a familiar figure in literature. Certain types return and certain are lost forever, figures such as the awkward, trusting ingenue or country girl of the Restoration period. Don Giovanni's *mille e tre*, the once singular arithmetic of the frenzied aristocrat, appears as a natural accumulation of the normal sexual exuberance of men and women freed, instructed, and determined.

The comic destinations of romantic love are shown in Saul Bellow's last novel. In *Humboldt's Gift*, the most engaging of the novel's female characters, Renata, leaves the intellectual, Citrine, to marry a mortician. In Joseph Heller's *Something Happened*, the hero sighs and says it sometimes occurs to him that he got married so that he could then be divorced.

Ennui is an attendant of irony. Andy Warhol, the painter, said about his decision to abandon his emotional and sexual life: "I was happy to see it go." Love, with its ancient distresses, cannot be removed from the landscape by fashion. It cannot be separated from power, for one thing. Nevertheless, the pains of rejection and loss, representing as they do interferences encountered by the individual will, are not sympathetically understood as sufferings to be endured. And in no way does such suffering take on any of the sweetness of fidelity injured, loyalty degraded.

Improvisation, moving on, substitution, defiance, inner healing—characteristics of the strategies by which a sexually relaxed society

cope with regret and denial—have a moral dominance in matters of painful love. A broken heart, caressed too long, is a dishonor often seen as a weapon of revenge, manipulation. *Anger* is the word psychiatrists give to assertions of the anguish of love.

Sex, sex—what good does it do anyone to “study” more and better orgasms, to open forbidden orifices, to experiment, to put himself into the satisfaction laboratory, the intensive-care ward of fulfillment? The body is a poor vessel for transcendence. The Marquis de Sade spent his whole life, and his enormous powers of imagination, on positions, tortures, combinations, dreamlike prowess and endurance. But it was a dream indeed, and most of the far reaches his imagination sent him toward are physically impossible. Satiety, in life, is quick and inevitable. The return of anxiety, debts, bad luck, age, work, thought, interest in the passing scene, ambition, anger cannot be deferred by lovemaking. The consolations of sex are fixed and just what they have always been.

In the seventies sex has become information, about yourself, about others, about yourself in relation to others. The practices of “polling”—one technique invading or pretending to invade the public mind—works here in the interest of sexual technique and attitude, giving a quasi consensus, often to nothing more than the mere practice of polling itself. Questionnaires, reports, new studies, “probing surveys” (*sic*), the “real” truth about women, homosexuality, premarital and postmarital intercourse, about changing views and changing positions. These dubious statistics are an industry, and like the manufacture of other products, there is little worry about repetition, need, accuracy, or significance. The title of each new book is very much like a new brand name for an old offering.

The most depressing part of the sexual information business is that, in the way of commerce, it is offered for our health and reassurance. Pessimism, naturally, does not sell, nor does skepticism—that, one assumes, the poor consumer can provide for himself, from his own experience. In the books and articles conclusions never fail to liberate, and if there is nothing new, whatever exists takes value from its mere occurrence, that is, if one believes the surveys give any true picture of contemporary sexual life. Piety, exploitation, complacency, triviality, and spurious objectivity deface these scrofulous enterprises.

*Sexual Behavior in the 1970's*⁴ is a study exposed to the public by Morton Hunt on behalf of the Playboy Foundation. The pastoral note on which the study ends is typical of this kind of work:

The changes that are taking place are none the less important and profound for taking place within the culture rather than breaking away from it; indeed, they may be more valuable than total sexual radicalism would be. For while they are bringing so much that is pleasurable, healthful and enriching into American life, they are doing so without destroying emotional values we have rightly prized, and without demolishing institutions necessary to the stability of society itself.

More valuable, pleasurable, healthful, emotional values, stability of society. The sadness, the corruption, the meaningless of all this is one aspect of the 1970s.

To think of the family today is bewildering because the classes are so far apart in the scenery in which daily life takes place. For those in the light the uncertainties have to do with hanging on, imagining the future, imagining if possible the meaning of the generations, of youth and old age, money, and the menace of reduction. In the darkness below, within the family there are joblessness, crime, madness, cruelty, and despair. It is not easy to remember that these scenes are part of the same play.

When the politicians, the candidates, speak of the poor and the unemployed, of those on welfare, they are being no more empty than the rest of us in being unable to convey any sense of the experience of the condition, the misery and horror. There is still an inclination to see the poor in previous images, perhaps the more consoling ones of the 1930s: a wrinkled face, battered but benign; a worn body in which Christian doctrine still circulates in the veins; young families in decaying bungalows with an unpaid-for car in the drive. The share-cropper, the Okie, the miner, the laid-off factory force, memories from one's own family. Television, magical as it is for certain events in real life, cannot fully picture on its small frame the slums of the city, the menacing breakdown, the insanity, the brutality, the leprous isolation. What has become unimaginable exists in images of fear, hatred, and withdrawal. Fear is sanctioned just now because there is much to be afraid of.

One thing that distorts our comprehension of the life of the poor is that on the street, in the supermarket, the marvelous disguise of the mass-produced American clothes gives a plausible surface, almost a shine, to what is really implausible and dark. On the evening news, the young thief or killer in his sneakers, his jacket, his jeans; his family in turtlenecks, jerseys. Together they appear in a state of health, often beautiful, well provided for, their clear and startling contemporariness like a miraculous mask.

In the city slums it is the houses, the rooms, the halls, the very walls, that define the actual life. It is here that everything necessary and hospitable to a decent life is lacking. This is home and family and relationship. It is here, inside, that deformations are so pervasive and inescapable, here that the devastations of character and purpose grow. Society is never asked to experience directly the misery and its attendant, hidden rages and abusive idleness.

In New York City the old, the very old, have become victims of the very young. Poor, crippled people, 82 years old or even in one case 103 years old, are beaten, killed for two dollars, ninety-five cents, for nothing. The age of the victims, the paltriness of the "take," the youth of the criminals, the bizarre equality of poverty between the robbed and the robber, outrages every sense of reason, even criminal reason, and makes one look beyond the act. Part of the choice of victim is that his weakness is immediately evident and is itself a sort of affront. An old and enfeebled, poverty-worn person is, apparently, to the battered children of the slums an object that is contemptible and finally not quite real, for to imagine old age one has to imagine life as a long flow, something protected by nature and therefore meaningful in its orderly progress from one stage to another.

Part of the preying upon each other comes from the familiarity of neighborhood, the known turf, known for its vulnerability, its exposure to every injury and insult. Middle-class neighborhoods in the city are places of warm beauty, utterly beguiling behind the curtained, plant-filled windows. The nice streets are a shimmer of light and power, taxis and doormen, smiles and golden belief—an obstacle in their foreignness, their dreamy protection and unassailability. Great sophistication, vigilance, imagination are needed to storm these heights, and the very young, poor criminals do not often possess that felonious knowledge and experience. The clever criminals of the old school are like figures in a film comedy. They drive up

to expensive hotels in limousines, dressed in dinner jackets, in order to plunder the safes filled with diamonds, acting always swiftly and efficiently, and above all, mannerly, out of consideration for the quality of the loot.

Here in the city the worst thing that can happen to a nation has happened: we are a people afraid of its youth. One's own memory—the memory of a girl—was of turning about on a dark street at night, fearful of footsteps coming closer, turning and saying, “Oh, it is only a boy.” Relief. Now for a young man to be in his twenties or thirties, out of jail, is in some way a guarantee of accommodation to society—at least in the mass, if not of course in particular cases.

For the sick and dangerous young, the idea of “treatment” is a cliché, the joke of a psychiatry which does not know how to treat such devastating deviations, such appalling dislocations, such violence that baffles by its fecklessness. There is no will to undertake reconstruction of society. Not only is the imagination lacking just now, but the very terms of the reconstruction, the extent of it, freeze speculative thought and reasonable recommendation.

Revolutionary societies destroy or brutally “reeducate.” Some countries, like India, have long ago learned to look upward and inward as they step around filth and hunger. The torpor of the Indian millions is a blessing for the prosperous. Here, among the poor, there is a political accommodation, or at least no symptom of organized revolt. Instead there is random crime. *Random*—a felicitous term that gives no substance to the devastation.

The wild growth of dangerous criminal insanity in the cities is a comment on the meek young with their ashrams in old brownstones, on Moonies in costly hotels and country estates, on clean-cut groups quietly meditating. Poverty and its abuses to children have their transforming power. Young persons stab and kill, throw each other off the roof, beat each other to death on the playing ground, rape, mutilate, set buildings on fire. To allow the facts to enter the mind is a guilty act, as if one were recording the scene of a porn film with a suspicious degree of imagination. And from the public, pathetic screams for protection, when there is no protection. In the cities there has been a profound derangement of whole generations of the urban poor.

We cannot take it in. All we had planned on was Appalachia and the sweet, toothless smiles, the pale, white faces, ragged dresses, bare

feet, hungry glances. No matter—a vibrant, ferocious, active, heart-breaking insanity is as much a part of the seventies as intimacy, retreat to the private.

It is always a relief to return to the middle classes, to ponder the way culture, economics, fashions work upon these citizens who are a mirror, returning what society puts before them.

To think of our domestic life is to ask what sort of person is actually needed by society. What parents, what children, young adults, workers? What makes sense—the tough and practical, the unsure and idealistic? The inner-directed and the outer-directed, to use David Riesman's terms, seem merely private, accidentally characterological, as one may be stingy or generous. The work ethic describes one who lives in a society that invests work with great spiritual and historical necessity, seeing in toil, advancement, tenacity, a virtue beyond material reward—the definition of self. All must work, but how hard and at what and with what motivation beyond dollars? In the late sixties many young people answered the question of dollars by casual work quite unrelated to advancement, to their preparation, their interests, and their future: driving cabs, working as waiters, making jewelry, teaching transcendental meditation, walking dogs, playing the guitar. Marginal occupations are suitable to prosperous times and have little reality in inflationary, unstable periods.

"I love long life better than figs," Charmian, Cleopatra's attendant, says in Shakespeare's play. If things go on as we reasonably expect, young people will experience long life as an unruly challenge to morals, possibilities, fantasies. They will, in huge numbers, live way up into their seventies, and that means they will have three lives, with each one perhaps wiping out the one before as though it had never been. Who can easily imagine a young son or daughter marrying and living with the same person for close to fifty years? Or with two for twenty-five years each? This is not the way of hearts in love with the shifting demands of the ego, with painful pressures for new experience, second and third chances, lost hopes that are an accusation to self-esteem.

In a long life in which little can be taken for granted, it is not reasonable to project a fearful clinging to the known on the part of the contemporary sensibility—so far removed from the peasantlike stasis of times past. Instead, a nomadic search for the new waters and

pastures of each period of life leads one on, running from the dryness of the past. Hell is no exit—and without sanctions few would wish to stay in the closed cell.

It is no wonder that with parents, authority seems to have become a burden. Part of it is the peculiar melding of parents and young adults in the way they look and dress, in their common reverence for sexual experience, which they have been told need never end for the good and the healthy. Custom is shattered by the parents' fear of age and the children's disaffection about age's wisdom, difference, and virtue, by the vacation spirit of a people who are not sure that society needs its work, by the blurred future of the species—on and on. Coolness rather than domination is the complaint of children against parents, neglectful confusion rather than insistent assertion. Those who imagine that this can be reversed by the will, by mere opinion, are not credible, because the will to rule has itself collapsed along with the painful recognition of limits everywhere of every kind.

The women's movement has crystallized in domestic life changes that have been going on for decades. Historically, the political and social expression of the themes of women's liberation coincides with the needs of a world in which there are almost as many divorces as marriages, with smaller families, longer lives, the economic expansion desired by the average household for which two incomes are required, education of women, diminishment of the need for heavy muscular work, which means that the lives of men and women—talking on the phone, sitting at the desk, managing—became more and more alike.

The inner changes within women can scarcely be exaggerated. Ambition is natural to new groups freed, or demanding to be free and equal. No group demands equality for nothing, as a simple adornment of status. The arrival of women's ambition, transforming as it does private life, inner feeling, and public life, is not at all simple but instead resembles the subtle shiftings of human thought and life brought about by enormously challenging ideas, such as evolution and Freudianism. Many hang back, just as many would stand on the literal truth of Genesis; but no matter what the ideological reluctance may be, every life is an inchoate but genuine reflection of the change. We begin to act upon new assumptions without even being aware of the singular changes.

Society does not want women to lead a long life in the home. It is not prepared to support them and cannot give the old style true sanction. Children do not want their parents' lives to be given to them forever. Husbands cannot take the responsibilities for wives as an immutable duty, ordained by nature. Women's liberation suits society much more than society itself is prepared to admit. The wife economy is as obsolete as the slave economy.

But more than dollars are at stake. Power, the most insidious of the passions, is also the most cunning. The women's movement is in some respects a group like many others, organized against discrimination, economic and social inequities, legal impediments: against the structural defects of accumulated history. Perhaps it is that part of the movement the times will more or less accommodate in the interest of reality. The other challenges are more devastating to custom, uprooting as they do the large and the small, the evident and the hidden. The women's movement is above all a critique. And almost nothing, it turns out, will remain outside its relevance. It is the disorienting extension of the intrinsic meaning of women's liberation, much of it unexpected, that sets the movement apart. It is a psychic and social migration, leaving behind a violently altered landscape.

In the 1970s the insecurity of life, the rapid using up of resources, the alienating complexity of every problem from nuclear proliferation to falling reading scores, can scarcely fail to bewilder and lacerate relations between people in the family, in the streets, among the classes. When one tries to think of "domestic manners"—all of the rules and customs and habits which people have assumed as a group—one cannot imagine just who is sure enough of his ground to pass on the beliefs that grow out of reasonable certainty. And to whom are they offered, these beliefs and customs? The life of the young is far more complicated and murky than the life of those older. One thing looms out of the shadows: the reluctance of so many *promising* young people to have children. Where is the future?

ENDNOTES

¹Richard Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man* (New York: Knopf, 1977).

²Christopher Lasch, "The Narcissist Society," *New York Review of Books* (30 September 1976); also "The Waning of Private Life," *Salmagundi* (Winter 1977).

³Philip Rieff, *The Triumph of the Therapeutic: Uses of Faith after Freud* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966).

⁴Morton Hunt, *Sexual Behavior in the 1970's* (New York: Dell Paperback, 1975).

David Baltimore

Limiting Science: A Biologist's Perspective

CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH IN MOLECULAR BIOLOGY has grown up in an era of almost complete permissiveness. Its practitioners have been allowed to decide their own priorities and have met with virtually no restraints on the types of work they can do. Viewed as a whole, the field has not even met with fiscal restraints because, relative to "big science," molecular biology has been a relatively cheap enterprise.

Some of the funds that fueled the initial, seminal investigations in molecular biology were granted because of the medical implications of work in basic biology. Most continue to come from agencies concerned with health. Although basic research in biology has yet to have a major impact on the prevention and treatment of human disease, a backlash already seems to be developing in which various groups in our society question whether the freedom that has characteristically been granted to research biologists by a permissive public requires modification. Among the numerous elements prompting this questioning are impatience with the lack of practical results, and fears that direct hazards might result from the experimentation, that basic research may not be an appropriate investment of significant funds, and that dangerous new technologies may flow from discoveries in basic biology. Lay critics as well as a few members of the profession have argued that molecular biologists should concentrate their efforts in certain areas of research, like fertility mechanisms, while other

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areas, like genetics or aging, are possibly dangerous and certainly not worthy of financial support from the public. These critics believe that they can channel contemporary biology to fit their own conception of appropriate research.

I wish to argue that the traditional pact between society and its scientists, in which the scientist is given the responsibility for determining the direction of his work, is a necessary relationship if basic science is to be an effective endeavor. This does not mean that society is at the mercy of science, but rather that society, while it must determine the pace of basic scientific innovation, should not attempt to prescribe its directions.

What we call molecular biology today had its origins in individual decisions of a small number of scientists during the period from the late 1930s through the early 1950s. These people were trained in diverse fields, among them physics, medicine, microbiology, and crystallography. They created molecular biology out of the realization that the problems posed by genetics were central to understanding the structures of living systems. No one channeled them towards this line of thinking, no one cajoled them to tackle these problems; rather, their own curiosity and sense of timing led them to try to elucidate these mysteries. This history provides a model of how the most effective science is done.

It is partly the successes of molecular biology that have brought on the questioning of whether scientists should be allowed their freedom of decision. It is therefore worthwhile tracing the development of concerns about whether certain areas of science should be closed to investigation. Molecular biology is the science that has revealed to us the nature of one of the most fundamental of all substances of life, the gene. There is a very simple underlying reality to the transmission of characteristics from parents to children: a code based on four different chemicals, denoted by the letters A, T, G, and C, is used to store the information of heredity. The order in which these four chemicals appear in a virtually endless polymer, called DNA, is the language of life.

Knowing that DNA was the physical storehouse of the genes, Watson and Crick in 1953 first solved the problem of how the DNA is organized to assure that information is transferred with almost perfect reliability from parent cells to progeny cells. They showed that DNA is made of two strands intertwined together into a helix

and also that the four subunits in DNA are physically related so that only A and T form a specific pair as do G and C. The two strands are held together by this specific pairing so that the two strands carry redundant information. Each gene is thus really a gene and a mirror-gene; this self-complementarity allows DNA to repair itself—and therefore maintain the fidelity of its information—and also to duplicate itself, sending identical copies into the two daughter cells resulting from a round of cell division.

Following the monumental discovery of the structure of DNA, many scientists have contributed to learning how to make DNA, how to read DNA, how to cut DNA, how to rejoin DNA, and in general, how to manipulate at will the genes of very simple organisms.

What good has all of this new knowledge brought to the average person? First and of great importance is the contribution that scientific advances make to human culture. The continued accumulation of knowledge about ourselves and our environment is a crucial cultural aspect of contemporary life. Science as well as art illuminates man's view of himself and his relation to others. Our knowledge of how we work, how one person differs from and is similar to another, what is health and what disease, what we need to support health, and so on, helps to set the ground rules for the debates of politics and the productions of art.

The more practical benefits of biology can be expected to come in the future in the form of medical advances, or increases in food production, or in other manipulations of life processes that will be able to provide positive contributions to civilization. But molecular biology, for all of its power as a basic science, has not been easily translated into tangible benefits. This is a situation that could change very soon. New discoveries are rapidly bringing molecular biology closer to an ability to affect the lives of the general public.

RECOMBINANT DNA

Of the advances that have occurred, a critical one has been the development of a process called recombinant DNA research. This is a technique whereby different pieces of DNA are sewn together using enzymes; the chimeric DNA is then inserted into a bacterium where it can be multiplied indefinitely. Because the method allows genes from any species in the world to be put into a common type of

bacterium, there is a theoretical possibility of hazard in this research. The potential for unforeseen occurrences led a number of scientists, including me, to issue in 1974 a call for restraint in the application of these new methods. We were addressing a limited problem, whether there could be a recognizable hazard in the performance of certain experiments. That limited question opened a floodgate; other questions came pouring out and are still coming. They have led to front-cover stories in weekly magazines, to serious attempts at federal legislation, to a demoralization of some of the community of basic research biologists, and, most significantly, to a deep questioning of whether further advances in biology are likely to be beneficial or harmful to our society.

Much of the discussion about recombinant DNA research has centered on whether the work is likely to create hazardous organisms. The mayor of Cambridge, Massachusetts, raised the specter of Frankenstein monsters emerging from MIT and Harvard laboratories, and speculations about the possibility of inadvertent development of a destructive organism like the fictitious Andromeda Strain have been much in the news. I am personally satisfied that most of such talk is simply science fiction and that the research can be made as safe as any other research. The people who understand infectious diseases best make the arguments most strongly that recombinant DNA research is not going to create monsters. But rather than defend my judgment that the safety issue has been blown out of proportion, I want to consider some of the more general issues that have been raised by the controversy.

GENETIC ENGINEERING

If safety were the most important consideration behind the debate about recombinant DNA, then we might expect the debate to focus on the hazards of doing recombinant DNA experiments. Instead, many of the discussions that start considering such questions soon turn to a consideration of genetic engineering.

Two techniques labeled genetic engineering exist. Both originated because not everybody's genes are perfectly designed for the job of being a functioning human being, so that many instances of blood disorders, mental problems, and a host of other disabilities are traceable to a malfunctioning gene. It would be a triumph of

medicine if the effects of such genes could be countered, and two approaches for countering them have been considered, both of which are called genetic engineering. One approach involves altering some cells of the body so that they can carry out the needed function. A patient could, for instance, be treated in this way for a blood disease caused by an abnormal protein made by a mutant gene. A normal gene would be inserted into the precursor cells—immature bone marrow cells that ultimately develop into functioning blood cells. In this way, a normal protein could be made in place of, or along with, the aberrant protein. The genetically altered blood cell precursor could then cure the patient's disease. But the malfunctioning gene would still be transmitted to the patient's offspring. Because this form of genetic engineering would not change the gene pool of the species and because it may prove an effective medical treatment of disease, it does not present the same moral problem as the other form. It is likely to be the first type of genetic engineering tried on human beings, and might be tried within the next five years.

The second type of genetic engineering presents more of a dilemma because it could change the human gene pool. This would involve replacement of genes in the germ cells, cells that transmit their genes to our offspring. Such a change would represent a permanent alteration of the types of the genetic information that constitutes our species. Replacement of germ cell genes would be very difficult and is, I suspect, at least twenty years away. It presents no theoretical problems, only formidable logistic problems.

Both forms of genetic engineering, but especially the engineering of germ cells, present two very deep and perplexing problems: who is to decide, and how shall they decide what genes are malfunctional? Decisions about which genes are good and which bad truly represent decisions of morality and are therefore highly subjective. Fear that dictators will decide which genes should be suppressed and which promoted, and that their criteria for decision will be how best to maintain their own power, has made the phrase "genetic engineering" symbolic of the moral problems that can be created by modern biology.

Genetic engineering of human beings is not the same as recombinant DNA research. Genetic engineering is a process carried out on human beings; recombinant DNA methods are ways to purify genes. Such genes might be used in genetic engineering procedures but are

much more likely to be used as tools in studies of biological organization or as elements in a biological manufacturing process. Although genetic engineering is not the same as recombinant DNA research, the two are rightly linked because recombinant DNA work is hastening the day when genetic engineering will be a feasible process for use on certain human diseases. Since recombinant DNA work is also bringing closer the discovery of many other possible new medical treatments, and is likely to bring other new capabilities, why is there so much focus on genetic engineering? I believe that genetic engineering, because of its tabloid appeal, has become a symbol to many people of the frightening potential of modern-day technology. Rather than seeing in molecular biology the same complex mixtures of appropriate and inappropriate applications that characterize all powerful sciences, many people have allowed the single negative catch phrase "genetic engineering" to dominate discussions. People worry that if the possibility of curing a genetic defect by gene therapy should ever become a reality, the inevitable result would be "people made to order." It is argued that unless we block recombinant DNA research now, we will never have another chance to control our fate.

LIMITS TO BASIC BIOLOGY

To see the form of the argument against recombinant DNA research most clearly and to highlight its danger to intellectual freedom and creativity, we should realize that similar arguments have been put forward relative to other areas of basic biology. One of the most respected critics of recombinant DNA research, Robert Sinsheimer, has for instance, made comparable analyses of two other research topics, research on aging and attempts to contact extraterrestrial beings.¹ He argues that if research on aging were to be successful, people could live to much older ages and the changed age structure of the population would bring serious stresses to society. His fear about searching for extraterrestrial beings is, again, that we could be successful, and he considers that the discovery of civilizations much more advanced than ours would have effects on us like those the Europeans had on native Americans after the discovery of the New World. In the case of recombinant DNA research as well as the other topics, Dr. Sinsheimer says we should avoid studying these areas of

science. Rather, he believes, we should put our resources into investigating areas of proven need, such as fertility control.

These examples—and I could choose many others, especially outside of biology—have the same general form: certain people believe that there are areas of research that should be taboo because their outcome might be, or in some scenarios will be, detrimental to the stable relationships that characterize contemporary society. I have heard the argument in a different and more pernicious form from members of a Boston area group called Science for the People. They argue that some research in genetics should not go on because its findings might be detrimental to the relationships they believe should characterize a just society. Such arguments are reminiscent of those surrounding the eugenics movements that developed in Germany and Russia in the 1920s. After a period of intense debate, these countries with opposing ideologies settled on opposing analyses of the role of genetics in determining human diversity.² German scientists and politicians espoused a theory of racial purification by selective breeding, while Russia accepted the Lamarckian principle of transmission of acquired characteristics. In both cases, science was forced into a mold created by political and social ideology, and in both cases the results were disastrous.

NECESSITY OF FREEDOM

As I see it, we are being faced today with the following question: should limits be placed on biological research because of the danger that new knowledge can present to the established or desired order of our society? Having thus posed the question, I believe that there are two simple, and almost universally applicable, answers. First, the criteria determining what areas to restrain inevitably express certain sociopolitical attitudes that reflect a dominant ideology. Such criteria cannot be allowed to guide scientific choices. Second, attempts to restrain directions of scientific inquiry are more likely to be generally disruptive of science than to provide the desired specific restraints. These answers to the question of whether limits should be imposed can be stated in two arguments. One is that science should not be the servant of ideology, because ideology assumes answers, but science asks questions. The other is that attempts to make science serve ideology will merely make science impotent without assuring that

only desired questions are investigated. I am stating simply that we should not control the direction of science and, moreover, that we cannot do so with any precision.

Before trying to substantiate these arguments I must make a crucial distinction. The arguments pertain to basic scientific research, not to the technological applications of science. As we go from the fundamental to the applied, my arguments fall away. There is every reason why technology should and must serve specific needs. Conversely, there are many technological possibilities that ought to be restrained.

To return to basic research, let me first consider the danger of restricting types of investigation because their outcome could be disruptive to society. There are three aspects of danger. One is the fallacy that you can predict what society will be like even in the near future. To say, for instance, that it would be bad for Americans to live longer assumes that the birth rate will stay near where it is. But what happens if the birth rate falls even lower than it is now in the United States and also stabilizes elsewhere in the world? We might welcome a readjustment of the life span. In any case, we have built a world around a given human life span; we could certainly adjust to a longer span, and it would be hard to predict whether in the long run the results would be better or worse.

In a general form, I would call this argument for restricting research the Error of Futurism. The futurist believes that the present holds enough readable clues about the future to provide a good basis for prediction. I doubt this assumption; to think that the data of today can be analyzed well enough to predict the future with any accuracy seems nonsensical to me.

The second danger in restricting areas of scientific investigation is more crucial: although we often worry most about keeping society stable, in fact societies need certain kinds of upheaval and renewal to stay vital. The new ideas and insights of science, much as we may fight against them, provide an important part of the renewal process that maintains the fascination of life. Freedom is the range of opportunities available to an individual—the more he has to choose from, the freer his choice. Science creates freedom by widening our range of understanding and therefore the possibilities from which we can choose.

Finally, attempts to dictate scientific limits on political or social considerations have another disastrous implication. Scientific orthodoxy is usually dictated by the state when its leaders fear that truths could undermine their power. Their repressive dicta are interpreted by the citizens as an admission of the leaders' insecurity and may thus lead to unrest requiring further repression. A social system that leaves science free to explore, and encourages scientific discoveries rather than trying to make science serve it by producing the truths necessary for its stability, transmits to the members of that society strength, not fear, and can endure.

The other argument I mentioned in opposing imposition of orthodoxy on science is the practical impossibility of stopping selected areas of research. Take aging as a prime example. It is one of the mystery areas of modern biology. The questions are clear. Why do we get older? Why do organ systems slowly fail? Why does one species of animal live three years and another live for one hundred? These seemingly straightforward questions are unapproachably difficult for modern biology. Not only can we not understand events that occur over years, but we even have difficulty understanding questions about events that require minutes to transpire. In fact, molecular biologists are really only experts in the millisecond range of time. Such times are those of chemical reactions; to understand events in longer time frames probably requires knowing how individual reactions are integrated to produce clocks that measure time in seconds to years. Clues to the great mysteries of biology—memory, aging, and differentiation—lie in understanding how biological systems tell time.

There are a few hints about where answers to the puzzle of aging might be found, but they are only the vaguest suggestions. In such an area of science, history tells us that successes are likely to come from unpredictable directions. A scientist working on vitamins or viruses or even plants is just as likely to find a clue to the problem of aging as is a scientist working on the problem directly. In fact, someone outside the field is more likely to make a revolutionary discovery than someone inside the field.

Another example will help to show the generality of this contention. Imagine that we were living at the turn of the last century and had wanted to help medical diagnosis by devising a method of seeing into the insides of people. We would probably have decided to fund medical scientists to learn how to use bright lights to see through

patients' skin. Little would we have guessed that the solution would be revolutionary and would come, not from a medical research scientist, but from a physicist who would discover a new form of radiation, X-rays.³

Major breakthroughs cannot be programmed. They come from people and areas of research that are not predictable. So if you wanted to cut off an area of fundamental research, how would you be able to devise the controls? I contend that it would be impossible. You could close the National Institute of Aging Research, but I doubt that any major advance in that field *could* be prevented. Only the shutdown of all scientific research can guarantee such an outcome.

Although they would fail to produce their desired result, attempts explicitly to control the directions of basic research would hardly be benign. Instead, disruption and demoralization would follow from attempts to determine when a scientist was doing work in approved directions and when he was not. Creative people would shun whole areas of science if they knew that in those areas their creativity would be channeled, judged, and limited. The net effect of constraining biologists to approved lines of investigation would be to degrade the effectiveness of the whole science of biology.

Put this way, the penalty for trying to control lines of investigation seems to me greater than any conceivable benefit. I conclude that society can choose to have either more science or less science, but choosing *which* science to have is not a feasible alternative.

I must repeat a qualification of this broad generalization: the less basic the research area in which controls are imposed, the less general disruption will be caused by the controls. The development of a specific sweetener, pesticide, or weapon could be prevented with little generalized effect.

While it seems necessary that scientific research be free of overt restraints, it would be naive to think that science is not directed at all. Many crucial decisions are made about general directions of science, usually by the control of available resources. Again, the formula I used before is applicable: the less basic the area of research, the easier it is to target the problems. A fallacy behind some of the hopes for the "War on Cancer" was the assumption that the problems to be solved were sufficiently well defined to allow a targeted, applied approach to the disease. Some problems could be defined and those were appropriate targets for a war on the disease, but the deeper mysteries of

cancer are so close to the frontiers of biology that targets are hard to discern.

UNSELECTIVE LIMITS TO SCIENCE

I have painted a picture of inexorable, uncontrollable development of basic scientific knowledge. The response of many people to such a vision might well be "If we can't put any controls on research, maybe we shouldn't have any research." I see the rationale in this criticism because it is conceivable that the rate of accretion of knowledge could become so high that a brake might be needed. A way exists to produce a slowdown, that is, by controlling the overall availability of resources. A nonselective brake on fundamental biology would decrease productivity without the disruptive and dangerous effects of trying to halt one area and advance another.

Because such a brake was applied in the late 1960s, today we have less basic research, measured in constant dollars spent on it, than we had then. As a result of the slowdown, the danger seen by many is not that we have too much basic research, but rather that we are living on our intellectual capital and that an infusion of funds into basic areas of research is needed before these scientific resources are exhausted. It must also be realized that our commitment to the solution of problems like cancer requires that we develop much more basic knowledge.

I may seem to have strayed from my topic of recombinant DNA research, but I think not. In 1977, there was a draft bill in the United States Senate to set up a National Commission on Recombinant DNA Research. The charge to this commission discussed mainly questions of safety, but at the end of the bill questions of ethics and morality entered. The bill was a clear invitation to begin the process of deciding what research shall be allowed and what research prevented. The battle to stop the creation of this commission was waged by scientists, university presidents, and other concerned individuals across the country. I believe that the long-term success or failure of these efforts will determine whether America continues to have a tradition of free inquiry into matters of science or falls under the fist of orthodoxy.

To finish this discussion, let me quote from the most eloquent analyst of contemporary biology, Lewis Thomas, the president of the

Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York. Writing in the *New England Journal of Medicine* about the recombinant DNA issue, Dr. Thomas ended with this analysis of the role of scientific research in the life of the mind:

Is there something fundamentally unnatural, or intrinsically wrong, or hazardous for the species, in the ambition that drives us all to reach a comprehensive understanding of nature, including ourselves? I cannot believe it. It would seem to me a more unnatural thing, and more of an offense against nature, for us to come on the same scene endowed as we are with curiosity, filled to overbrimming as we are with questions, and naturally talented as we are for the asking of clear questions, and then for us to do nothing about it, or worse, to try to suppress the questions. This is the greater danger for our species, to try to pretend that we are another kind of animal, that we do not need to satisfy our curiosity, exploration, and experimentation, and that the human mind can rise above its ignorance by simply asserting that there are things it has no need to know.⁴

ENDNOTES

¹R. L. Sinsheimer, "Inquiry into Inquiry: Two Opposing Views," *The Hasting Center Report* 6(4)(1976):18.

²L. R. Graham, "Political Ideology and Genetic Theory: Russia and Germany in the 1920's," *The Hasting Center Report* 7(5)(1977):30-39.

³Dr. Mahlon Hoagland first suggested to me this example.

⁴P. 328 in *New England Journal of Medicine*, 296:324-28.

The Accuser and the Accused

ROUSSEAU TELLS US THAT HIS WRITING CAREER was born from "virtue outraged."¹ The "four or five years" of "effervescence"² that follow the illumination he experienced on the road to Vincennes are years of anger and intransigence. He went to literature as one goes to war. He denounces civilization's evils. Answers and attacks coming from all sides, he attempts to retaliate blow for blow: "I saw nothing but error and folly in the doctrine of our wise men, nothing but oppression and misery in our social order."³ Later, Rousseau was to note that this intensity of virtue and endless defiance were "states most contrary to his nature,"⁴ but if the attitude was exaggerated, it was not feigned: "I never acted."⁵

Confronting the public, Rousseau steps forward as an accuser: "The contempt which my deep reflections had inspired in me for the customs, principles and prejudices of my age made me insensible to the mockery of those who followed them; and I crushed their little witticisms with my observations, as I might crush an insect between my fingers."⁶ Hence the theatrical quality in his writings and in his attitude. He conforms to models of behavior borrowed from antiquity; he wants to communicate his ideas with the most energetic language, and he succeeds in being hailed as a master of eloquence. For Diderot, he is the "censor of letters, the Cato and the Brutus of our age."⁷ The successfully reincarnated model is that of the magistrate or of the lone hero, who reminds a forgetful community of the forsaken virtues and civic values.

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Rousseau's accusatory attitude must, in my view, be given very serious consideration. His system of thought cannot be separated from the way he expresses it. The rhetoric in Rousseau is not an external or superadded element; it is intrinsic to the intellectual message. Here is a man who makes his readers know that he belatedly begins a career as a writer because he finds it urgent to warn the civilized world against lethal dangers. He wants the public to see him as someone who has decided to start a new life entirely devoted to truth. And, as he foresees a premature death, he feels able to reject further compromise and to speak his mind accordingly. The initial gesture of accusation establishes a dramatic relationship between the writer and his contemporaries. The conspicuous nature of that relationship and the resulting existential developments are no less important than the ideas and certainties that are at the heart of Rousseau's argument. The texts themselves, if fully perceived, oblige us to take account of this dramatic aspect, and in so doing we do not fall prey to any fallacy, either biographical or psychological.

One has only to pay attention to what is actually being said by Rousseau; a challenge is being made by a man from outside, by a citizen of Geneva, who wills himself to be a stranger to the evil he is describing. From there on, Rousseau's subsequent writings and the personal situation they imply can be considered as the logical consequences of his first intervention as a self-appointed prosecutor. He not only has to prove that his accusation is based on coherent and valid principles, but at the same time he is bound to experience all the further predicaments deriving from the conflict he first entered into.

For a pragmatic analysis, that is, for a careful study of literary work as action modifying both the writer's and the reader's mind, Rousseau offers a model experience. What ought to come out of a relationship with the public which the writer has initially established as a justice-seeking aggression? It seems to me that Rousseau's inner evolution, as manifested by his successive works, answers this question with great clarity. One is tempted to consider it still relevant, exemplary and premonitory, in the context of modern attitudes which strike us by their similarity to Rousseau's. To be sure, some retrospective illusion is probably mixed with what we cannot help reading as the contemporary message of the Rousseauian adventure; most readers allow themselves to be led into "overinterpretation." But this very fact cannot be disregarded. However mistakenly,

Rousseau invites our interpretations, seeming to offer us in his person and thoughts interpretative tools applicable to our time.

The notion of accusation provides a very effective system of reference if one wishes to distinguish several periods in Rousseau's works, dividing them into groups. The first group of writings is clearly marked by the identification of society's evils and assigns a relatively small place to personal apologetics. This group of works includes the first two *Discours*, the preface to *Narcisse*, and even the *Lettre à d'Alembert* (even though Rousseau thinks that the last marks a change of style and that the initial indignation does not prevail⁸). Let us add that an important part of the writings on music is prompted by the spirit of accusation; they fight the "noise" and the harmonic artifices of French music; they seek to discredit Rameau; and one should not forget that Rousseau's musical polemic is more or less simultaneous with his social polemic. The second group is that of the "criteriological" works. They define and systematically develop the principles and values in the name of which the accusation has been made. They are also, to a certain extent, conciliatory works that indicate under what conditions remedies or palliatives can intrude. They include the fiction of *La Nouvelle Héloïse* (1760), the half-fiction of the *Emile* (1762), and the theoretical constructions of the *Contrat social*, including their application in the cases of Corsica and Poland. Finally comes the group of works where the initial situation is reversed and Rousseau speaks as the *accused*, rejecting anything that might convict him of guilt to the point of ascribing to interfering influences—that of Diderot for instance—the bitter tone of his first writings. First, intellectual apologetics prevail: Rousseau defends his thoughts more than his person in the *Lettre à Monseigneur de Beaumont* (1763) and the *Lettre de la Montagne* (1764). Then, Rousseau devotes himself entirely to personal pleading; he defends Jean-Jacques's *true image* against the monstrous image that the "directors" of the plot (so he thinks) succeeded in having universally believed. The initial accusation has produced the entire body of writings, through a vast cycle of transformations in which the initial conflict has been lived to its final expression.

Accusatorial thought fosters antinomies; it moves forward by antitheses; it is spontaneously "Manichaean." Rousseau's first *Discours* is built on strong oppositions. After unfolding the image of the triumph of light over ignorance, Rousseau makes a reversal. The

brilliant existence of organized societies is but a superficial “polish”; under this deceptive semblance is a concealed being, dominated by pride, instigating hate and estranging consciences. Human relationships are thus perverted. The apparent goodwill that orders social relationships hides a deadly combat. The luxury of a small number does not bring prosperity to others, but misery. This moral disorder is *new*; it accompanies the “renewal” of the arts and sciences. Another system of oppositions is then set up—the world of today versus the world of our ancestors (the analogy: Imperial Rome versus Republican Rome); urbanized societies versus rustic or primitive societies (the analogy: Athens versus Sparta). In addition, there are traditional ethical oppositions: the superfluous versus the necessary; disease (corruption, softness) versus health (integrity, ruggedness); luxury versus frugality; femininity and cowardice versus virility and military courage; private interests versus patriotic devotion, and so on. And if, at the end of the *Discours*, the arts and sciences are not utterly condemned, it is thanks to a new antinomy: true science (reserved for a small number and cultivated in the academies) versus pseudoscience (practiced by a multitude, by a “populace”⁹).

This rather short discourse, consistent with academic ritual, sparks a huge debate and makes of Rousseau a man very much in fashion. Was it, however, so unique in 1750 to attack luxury, frivolous eloquence, “fatal arts,”¹⁰ “vain sciences”? Were cultural optimism and belief in progress so widespread? Of course, at the time of the launching of the *Encyclopédie*, a large section of public opinion was ready to trust in the progress of knowledge, the technical improvements, the multiplied amenities produced by the practice of reason in human affairs. In this respect, the “moderns” seem to have triumphed over the “ancients” once and for all. However, here is Rousseau who reopens this quarrel. His purpose is not to affirm that the taste, arts, and knowledge of the moderns are inferior to those of the ancients—he gives in to his contemporaries on this point—but to declare that a *moral* decay accompanies scientific and technical progress. But these accusations, these objections, formulated in the name of ethical values, are not *new*. The preachers had frequently made such objections. How can one explain the scandal which, in 1750–1751, effectively assures Rousseau’s success? Did he do anything other than bid higher? Did he invent nothing but the “rhetorical colors” that

made his argument biting? Is he different only because of the provocative accent of his hyperbolic eloquence?

In Rousseau's accusations against the arts and sciences, reprobation is expressed in various ways. One of the most frequent is the repetitiously used qualificative; *frivolous*, *vain*, *fatal* are words that recur constantly with him. These words belong to a preacher's vocabulary. His contemporaries did not fail to recognize that. Someone from Lyons writes: "It seems to me that he is the most vigorous writer in our century. How well, for example, this man would have preached!"¹¹ Talleyrand will declare: "When one reads Rousseau, one believes oneself to be in the confessional."¹² This, in fact, is the realization of one of Rousseau's childhood dreams. Let us reread the first book of the *Confessions*: "I fancied myself as a preacher . . . one day Uncle Bernard read us a very fine sermon in his serious style . . . we then began to make up sermons."¹³

Rousseau's attacks against "vain curiosity" continue a long history of religious polemics against all that distracts the individual from the "sole necessity," which is a concern for salvation. Rousseau concludes his *Discours* with a peroration that echoes the *redi in te ipsum* from Augustine:

O virtue! Sublime science of simple souls, are so many difficulties and preparations needed to know you? Are not your principles engraved in all hearts, and is it not enough to learn your laws to commune with oneself and listen to the voice of one's conscience in the silence of the passions? That is true philosophy, let us know how to be satisfied with it; and without envying the glory of those famous men who are immortalized in the republic of letters, let us try to put between them and us that glorious distinction noted between two great people long ago: that the one knew how to speak well, the other to act well.¹⁴

What did religious authors write? Let us listen to Pascal: "Physical science will not console me for the ignorance of morality in the time of affliction. But the science of ethics will always console me for the ignorance of the physical sciences."¹⁵ And also to Malebranche, who, although a follower of Descartes and less hostile to scientific curiosity, writes: "He who communes most with himself, and listens to the inner truth in the greatest silence of his senses and his passions, is the most solidly virtuous."¹⁶ It is also Malebranche who uses the terms Rousseau will borrow to maintain that the law, which is "the

inviolable order of the minds," is "engraved in man's heart." In the *Entretiens affectifs*, Fénelon writes: "Alas! How many grave doctors do not see anything while thinking they know it all! They do not want to be ignorant of anything . . . Oh! how they would hate all that curious research, if they knew man well! . . . Oh! What can we learn from that which is nothing? There is only one infinite truth, which absorbs everything and which does not leave any curiosity outside itself: all else is but nothingness, and therefore a lie."¹⁷ But this similarity between Rousseau and the theologians, the solidarity in their accusations against the "curious sciences," against luxury, and against inequality, cannot conceal an essential difference. Rousseau and the theologians invoke quite different norms and authorities as the basis of their accusations.

In the preachers' sermons, the accusation is directed against the sins of the world, the idolatry of earthly possessions, *the pride of the libido sciendi*; their preaching invites the pursuit of true possessions, which are spiritual life, salvation, grace from Christ. Fénelon exclaims: "O Jesus, I no longer have any other doctor than you, any other book but your bosom. There I learn everything while being ignorant of everything and while abasing myself. There I live the same life you live in your Father's bosom."¹⁸ In the funeral oration of Louis le Grand, in which the luxury of the court is strongly condemned, Massillon enraptures his listeners with the first sentence: "God alone is great, brethren!"¹⁹

These examples ought to suffice. They permit us to understand the novel effect of Rousseau's *Discours*: the accusation is not accompanied by a religious call. Rousseau's disturbing innovation does not lie in reproving the evils endured by mankind in society; it consists in not making of this reproof the premise of an act of contrition, the prelude to a conversion. Rousseau does not seek to revive his reader's faith, as his predecessors did; he makes vivid an ethicopolitical regret. To the evils of society, he contrasts the image of another social order. When he exclaims "O virtue," this term must be understood in its civic, political, "Machiavellian" sense. The final antithesis goes back to the Plutarchian confrontation between Athens and Sparta which ran through the whole discourse. Of course, the antithesis which contrasts the "polite" city with the "virtuous" city is not at all new. But it insistently takes the place, in the *Discours*, of the expected antithesis which would have contrasted worldly virtues with spiritual

virtues. In order to innovate, it was enough to surprise the reader with something not to be expected in traditional academic discourse; a social ideal is openly preferred to a religious ideal. The social ideal, this other imagined society, is by no means a utopia. It is the idealization of a lost world, the happy picture of a frugal past, where virtuous *doing* prevailed over dissimulative *speaking*. Wherever preachers deplored the devastating effects of godlessness, Rousseau, on the contrary, points to the disappearance of *civisme*: "We have physicists, geometers, chemists, astronomers, poets, musicians, painters; *we no longer have citizens*."²⁰ Nevertheless, Rousseau knew perfectly well what he owed to religious tradition, and in response to the attacks, he sets up his line of defense on the positions held by religious apologetics. During the controversy evoked by his *Discours*, and particularly in his response to the King of Poland, Rousseau points out that the observations judged as shocking in his *Discours* are in perfect agreement with the Scriptures and the church fathers; he mentions the example of the "twelve poor fishermen and artisans" who have spread the teachings of Christ.²¹ Yet even when Rousseau refers to the Scriptures, he is concerned not with "eternal life," but with man's life on this earth, man's happiness among his fellowmen. Hence, Rousseau places himself on the level of "worldly" existence and institutions which interests his friends, the philosophers; like them, he is ready to consider man as a being of passion and needs who seeks satisfaction in this world—the remaining question is to know which form of existence will guarantee true and full satisfaction. As we have endeavored to show, the most desirable object for Rousseau is the transparency of human relationships, the immediate exchange.²² Rousseau has often expressed his belief in an afterlife, but, in his systematic thought, he always subordinated religious to civic ideals.²³

He denounces like the theologians, but he denounces the *political* nature of evil. One can immediately see that Rousseau is predestined to fight on two fronts. The theologians will bear him a grudge for abandoning the traditional *via salutis* for the benefit of civic or personal values: the "*merely civil religion*" of the *Contrat* subordinates faith to a political finality. As for the philosophers, they see in Rousseau a deserter from the fight for enlightenment, since with an argumentation of religious origin, he comes to throw doubt on

everything they are attempting to promote—morality of interests, apology for luxury, enrichment through commerce . . .

The substitution of the secular value (*civisme*) for the sacred value (salvation) does not discard the sacred forever. When one answers in political terms a religious question, almost inevitably the political answer is likely to keep a religious undertone. The element of moral guilt which the religious accusation awakened finds its atonement in the imagination of another social order, thus conferring on political schemes an irrational guilt-suppressing function. Even though we have passed from an injunction religious in character (salvation) to a political ideal (hence secular), it can be said, nevertheless, that *civisme* has become a *substitutive sacred value*; it breathes an intensity of regret or promise without which it would not match the vehemence of the accusation. What has often been described as a *secularization* of the hope of salvation must also be perceived as a *sacralization* of the idealized forms of political life. Let us add to this the following observation by way of corollary. Whereas Christian moralists (and particularly those who draw their inspiration from Jansenism: Pascal, Nicole, La Rochefoucauld) see in *amour-propre*, in the play of illusory appearances, an ontological blemish linked to original sin and henceforth inseparable from human nature, Rousseau places the responsibility on society, on the vices of social organization. By so doing, he does not merely propose (as Cassirer has shown²⁴) an original solution to the problem of theodicy; he is not content with exculpating God's Providence and rehabilitating the primitive nature of man. He further strengthens his accusation against society with an argument based on permanent and irrefutable causes of uneasiness—the lack of a complete and frank understanding between individuals, malevolence, selfish interests—which it is difficult not to encounter everywhere and at any moment, since they result, in fact, from the human condition. Rousseau, who was one of the first to indict society, immediately felt how much strength his indictment would gain, should he fuse the sociopolitical dependency endured by individuals to the ontological dependency resulting from the fact that a part of their being is entrusted to the opinion of their fellowmen, as if both resulted from the shortcomings of the existing social order. This is still a familiar device. The accusation always hits its target and always finds a listener when it joins the wrongs of society to the unavoidable imperfections of human relations. The accuser thus

mobilizes an existential dissatisfaction on behalf of his cause. It touches us at the level of some obscure uneasiness. What a relief to think that such an uneasiness is not irremediably tied to our very existence and that we will be able to rid ourselves of it at the cost of a politico-moral conversion and a change of exterior circumstances. The accusation, still so framed in our own time (but according to the model suggested by Rousseau), gives life to the hope of ontological change through the effect of social change. Hence the hangover on the morning after the revolution for those who expected a totally new life; the change in economic and political relations has not after all pushed back our ontological limits. (The point here is not to make Rousseau responsible, but to indicate how he has prefigured the radical proposition, which, by sacralizing politics, mixes the metaphysical expectation of salvation with the theory of social change.²⁵)

In Rousseau, the writer appears in a new role and a new status. He takes upon himself the task of moral preaching, which up to now exclusively and almost professionally belonged to the Church. At the same time, he assumes the right to examine the institutions and the deficiencies inherent in the political organization to which, following the traditional division of labor in France, most clergymen had previously paid assiduous deference. Finally, he expresses his unique individuality by capturing the public's attention, by becoming a legend in his lifetime under his Christian name of Jean-Jacques. Rousseau is certainly not the only nor the first intellectual to exercise this power, but he is able at the first attempt to do so masterfully and with a rare intuition of the reception which a free writer, not bound to any corporate body, can expect in doing so. It is this talent, as much as their conflict of ideas, that explains the animosity of Voltaire, his rival in the exercise of such power. Rousseau attacks with the intonations of Fénelon or Massillon, but his political and pedagogical views are expressed in the manner of Locke or Montesquieu. He studied neither theology nor law. He holds no position in the state: he speaks as an outsider. So, in each sphere of criticism, when he proposes a theory based on new foundations, he appears as an outsider, as someone without the necessary qualifications to intervene—hence the nickname, *Docteur Pansophe*, pinned on him by Voltaire. His propensity to assume so many roles, to claim competence in so many fields—thus being a *philosopher*—is not foreign to his feeling that he had antagonized those who, in each field,

assumed the right of sole competence to decide. When Rousseau thinks of the league of his persecutors and declares that league to be *universal*, he combines in his mind the retorts of all those whose special preserves he has invaded. He has interfered in the fields of established theology, politics, pedagogy, music, and medicine and is convinced that he has incurred the animosity of priests, statesmen, teachers, musicians, and doctors.²⁶

The logic of accusatorial thought implies also that antinomies of *thought* be sustained and authenticated by a *living* antagonism. The accusation compels the one who makes it to act the role of the accuser. The more massive and general the fault denounced, the more isolated the one who, to denounce it, sets himself apart. The heroic posture Rousseau now assumes is that of the challenger animated by ardor of virtue and love for mankind, alone against all, speaking to alienated and enslaved people about a community of the past. How revealing is the prosopopoeia of Fabricius, the only direct testimony about the illumination on the road to Vincennes: the virtuous consul, come back from the dead, addresses the decadent Romans and contrasts the image of the senate of Republican Rome.²⁷ Rousseau spontaneously adopts the attitude of someone from *another world* (in all senses) who, standing alone, admonishes a crowd. This is one of his favorite fantasies. The *Discours sur l'inégalité*, again, is built on this pattern: several times, he places an orator alone in front of a large group. He himself is that orator in the dedication where he addresses the whole Republic of Geneva. In the preamble to the *Discours*, he imagines himself to be in the lyceum of Athens, "having the Platos and the Xenocrates as judges and mankind as audience."²⁸ At the beginning of the second part, when he calls to mind the taking of the land, he imagines again an individual who should have appeared, alone against all others, to "shout" a solemn warning to his fellowmen.²⁹ Thus, on every occasion, openly revealing his identity, claiming the quality of citizen of Geneva, Rousseau asserts himself against the French, as someone from *elsewhere*, someone who speaks another tongue (*Barbarus hic ego sum quia non intelligor illis*³⁰); on the other hand, facing his fellow citizens of Geneva, he is the witness of the morality of another age. If he wants to be Genevan in order to proclaim his difference to the French, then to his Genevan audience he wants to offer an alternative idea of Geneva. He thus puts himself in a rhetorical situation which makes of him an exception in the face

of evil, he who alone has kept the ability to perceive and denounce corruption and decay. One can see how, wanting to “harmonize” his behavior and his thoughts,³¹ Rousseau has been led to assume the role of solitary opponent. Identifying his life with his convictions and building his convictions into an antinomic system, Rousseau is forced to espouse the values he has declared lost, disregarded, abandoned, and which he contrasts with the present decadence of the world. Rousseau makes common cause with banished truth, despised virtue, forgotten norms. He can only be right in his accusatorial hyperbole if he stands alone against all. Thus, the significance of these lines in which Rousseau remembers the circumstances and his state of mind when he wrote the *Discours sur l'inégalité*:

Wandering deep into the forest, I sought and I found the vision of those primitive times, the history of which I proudly traced. I demolished the petty lies of mankind; I dared to strip man's nature naked, to follow the progress of time, and trace the things which have distorted it; and by comparing man as he had made himself with man as he is by nature I showed him in his pretended perfection the true source of his misery. Exalted by these sublime meditations, my soul soared towards the Divinity; and from the height I looked down on my fellowmen pursuing the blind path of their prejudices, of their errors, of their misfortunes and their crimes. Then I cried to them in a feeble voice which they could not hear, “Madmen who ceaselessly complain of Nature, learn that all your misfortunes arise from yourselves!”³²

One will first note in this account of the *genesis* of the *Discours* how the rhetorical situation of the solitary appeal to mankind—which has been noted in the preceding discussion—is a determining factor in the memory of the author of the *Confessions*. Nevertheless, Rousseau, aware of the faults and miseries of mankind, not only appoints himself their critic and denouncer, but undertakes likewise to go back to the temporal beginning, to “earliest times,” to “natural man,” and to raise himself “near the divinity.” Rousseau moves away from the people he calls his fellowmen in the direction of both the primitive past and the transcendental vision. The act of critical opposition is lived, in one aspect, as the privileged possession of an exact image of the remotest past where the causal chain starts and, in the other, as a rapture that reaches the heights and allows one to contemplate and to judge history from God's point of view. To understand the chain of events, to explain evil by its genesis, to juxtapose to the lies of the

present humanity the goodness of primitive man: these are all ways to keep one's distance—to see from afar, to see from on high—which condemn Jean-Jacques to singularity and solitude (or which allow him to take advantage of his singularity and solitude). So, he is not only the one who proclaims truth as opposed to general error, but in addition, in his person, he is veracity itself, the personified alternative to social evils. He is bound to coincide with his discourse and to develop, from his singular subjectivity, another order of things, another moral world, a world of innocence and virtue opposed to the ways of the corrupt world. As we will see, for whoever tries to live this vocation, it can only generate anguish.

I have called criteriological the doctrinal body constituted by the *Emile* and the *Contrat social*, and I even included there *La Nouvelle Héloïse*. These works must in fact be considered in their narrow relationship to the earlier accusatorial texts which denounce evil and demonstrate its causal mechanism. The major doctrinal texts complete and justify the accusation: their value must be understood in this complementary relationship.

Let us simplify: the *Emile* and the *Contrat social* provide the explanation of the positively valorized concepts (virtue, morals, patriotism) which had previously been formulated, fleetingly and one by one, in the name of which and by virtue of which Rousseau had initially entered his accusation. Just as the attack on evil had been followed by a brilliant reconstruction of evil's probable genesis, its opposite had to develop fully in space and time. The simple idea of virtue had to lead to its elaboration in theory, to an entire history of education in virtue (the *Emile*). The idea of *civisme*, taken alone at first, had to lead to an exposition of the principles of the general will and civic obedience in a city where devotion to the mother country could give them meaning. It was not enough for the accusation to be sustained by the personal existence of the accuser, by his "reform," his "Roman tone,"³³ his choice of a simple life and of a craft to earn his bread. Rousseau's demand is broader: it contrasts to the accused world the image of a different world—an unaltered or a remodeled world—where a law reigns in whose name the present reality can be called corrupt. Not content with rejection of usurping authorities, he wanted to build the image of true sovereignty. As we have said before, the counterproposal of Rousseau is sociopolitical, not religious, even though in the city of the *Contrat* and in *Emile*'s

upbringing Rousseau wants to grant to the religious feeling a most important role, aimed at assuring the city's moral cohesion and the blossoming of individual conscience. Rousseau had the courage to give considerable breadth to a conception which is neither a utopia radically foreign to reality nor a compromise with the world as it is. The alternative universe whose model he presents obeys two imperatives in relation to contemporary historical and social reality: first, to differ completely from it, but second, to stay sufficiently close to contemporary reality to occupy a space seemingly so near that the reader, absent from the just city and gripped by virtuous remorse, will feel guilty because true life and happiness were perhaps within his reach and could have been reached at the price of a courageous conversion. Having first upset his reader, Rousseau makes him feel thoroughly guilty by showing him the life he could have had but did not choose. Should the reader take Jean-Jacques's side, he might experience an inner renewal. This is why the worlds created by Rousseau exert such an attraction: they appear to offer a better life (even on earth) for those who would have the audacity to reject convention and servitude. Contemporary experience teaches us that those who initially accept their guilt are prepared to listen to the catechisms proposed to them if, at the price of that new faith, they are able to leave fault behind and atone. This was the method of religious conversions; it is today that of political conversions. Rousseau is perhaps the prophet of transition from one sphere to the other, even though so many of his arguments are taken directly from Seneca and classical exhortation. Rousseau possessed the power to convert: in the *Emile*, the *Contrat social*, and the *Nouvelle Héloïse*, he showed the way back to the very principles, moral or political, whence a new existence could get its start and lead to eventual happiness. He thus gained rapidly a band of followers ready to follow this master of wisdom. To appreciate this, we have only to read the letters he received from numerous unknown correspondents, who for the most part declared themselves ready to leave everything in order to live by his side; we have only to consider the many attempts to apply theory in practice, inspired first by *La Nouvelle Héloïse* and the *Emile*, then by the *Contrat social*. Rousseau shows us very clearly how the accusatorial word can develop into seductive appeal at the moment when the negative critique gives way to the positive image (though

entirely imaginary) of a universe of goodness asserted as in the realm of the possible.

One example among many is offered by the preface of the *Emile*. There, Rousseau declares his opposition to the existing educational system. It is a radical opposition excluding all compromise. In his refusal, Rousseau initially associates himself with a general dissatisfaction: "There has been constant complaint about current practice."³⁴ But no one except Rousseau goes beyond expressing dissatisfaction. The sentence continues: "but never a plan for anything better." If he is not alone in the accusation, Jean-Jacques is the exception in formulating an alternative theory of education. And he will be more conspicuous yet when he becomes the adversary of the purely critical attitude of all contemporary men of letters: "The literature and the science of our century seek much more to destroy than to build."³⁵ So it is by the double refusal of established education and of destructive criticism that Rousseau defines his own endeavor. We are not extrapolating excessively in the direction of Hegelian philosophy when we speak here of the negation of negation. What is important to note is the fact that this double negation places Rousseau in the position of the solitary thinker facing universal error. He affirmed it: his ideas are his only. He presents them as his own, but, unlike Montaigne, who did the same thing without seeking to convince others, Rousseau postulates universality and demands everyone's adherence even though he has retreated into particularity: "It is not other people's ideas of education I am presenting, but my own; it is a long-standing reproach that I see things differently from other people."³⁶ Firm in his principles, he refuses all compromise with accepted customs: "I am always admonished to suggest something feasible. What in fact is being said to me is that I should propose what is being done or at least combine something good with the existing evil. A proposal like this is really more chimerical than mine, for in this alliance the good gets corrupted and the bad is not cured. I would rather follow the established usage than to adopt a good one by halves; there would be less contradiction in man, for he cannot direct his efforts to two opposite ends at once. Fathers and mothers, what is feasible is what you are willing to do. Should I be held accountable for what you want?"³⁷ The negation's negation leads to an entirely original program, different in all aspects from established practice and formulated in the tone of an ultimatum. It will then be possible

for Rousseau to build his educational plan through constant criticism of the existing system, contrasting it with the fictitious development of an imaginary pupil. And he will be able to produce a surprising effect of reality: the diversity of psychic functions taken into account and the multiplicity of evolutionary steps spaced between early childhood and adulthood confer on this ideal pupil a depth and a complexity which lend full credibility to his story. Here too, Rousseau displays an intuitive genius about the spiritual mutations which, over the course of life, result from the interaction of the laws of existence, the initiatives of the individual and the influences of the environment. Many causes come into play to determine a slow progression that would be harmed by acceleration. Emile now has the depth and the substance necessary to become the positive example which will be compared triumphantly to young men submitted to traditional education. Reread, for example, the passage in book 4 where Rousseau confronts "your pupil" with "mine." Rousseau succeeds in making plausible his pupil as a "model for comparison."³⁸ He gives him a reality which depreciates without possible recourse anything that does not resemble it. Emile's tutor, step by step, allows him freedom to develop in all circumstances according to his natural aptitudes. Thus, Emile exemplifies the reasons for rebellion against contemporary social practice and becomes the obvious model of a method which could make a new man by a rather simple recipe ("negative" education which leaves to the child the initiative with regard to the objects that surround him). But Rousseau carefully adds: "the ease of execution, greater or less, depends on a thousand circumstances which it is impossible to define except in a particular application of the method to such or such country, to such or such a condition."³⁹ Let us understand fully this important restriction: it allows the blame to be put on circumstances for the difficulty or the impossibility of practical application in such a way that the absolute value of the model will not suffer and its polemic function will not diminish. Even when it is inapplicable, Emile's upbringing is supposed to be most faithful to nature, and it should permit judgment on all other divergent upbringings. Rousseau would not concede that it could ever lose its value as a "regulative concept."

Similarly, this is the case with the *Contrat social*: he exhibits the criteriological model which permits him to judge and accuse existing societies, and he describes, at the same time, a structure workable

under certain conditions. Rousseau explains this very clearly. In book 5 of the *Emile*, Rousseau gives a summary of his political theory: Emile is about to travel and he needs to have a clear knowledge of the norms in order to evaluate the realities he will be faced with. "Before observing, one needs to establish rules for one's observations: one needs a scale with which to compare one's measurements. That scale is our principles of political law. Our measurements are the political laws of each country."⁴⁰ But Rousseau insists on ascribing a practical importance to his work, at least in the case of small states, and he hopes it will exert a delaying influence: "He had worked for his country and for small states structured similarly. If his doctrine could be somewhat useful to others, it would be by changing the objects of their respect and by slowing the decadence which they accelerate by their false observations."⁴¹

The accuser can now declare unacceptable the political forms which do not correspond to the proposed model, while reiterating that the ideal could in certain cases—at some other time, somewhere else—coincide with reality. The picture of the just society will fortify the grievances aimed against the unjust society, if it is possible to prove that a just society could exist on rare occasions. The writer's refusal becomes even more vehement; the reader's feeling of guilt painfully deepens, for he learns that he could contribute himself, under the same circumstances and perhaps by his own will, to sustain or to restore a city of true citizens, a city where sovereignty would be the privilege of the whole society.

La Nouvelle Héloïse also unites a negation and an affirmation. It paints a marvelous picture of mountains, lakes, groves, and beautiful souls, in order to oppose it to the world of Paris. But his antagonistic function, in order to work fully, must soon be reversed into a positive seduction: the novel makes one feel fully happy only when one moves away from the big city.

How was this novel born? First Rousseau had to refuse Paris in order to live in the countryside at the Hermitage. Then, alone with himself, Rousseau had to discover emptiness and amorous discontent. *La Nouvelle Héloïse* is thus born from the union of accusatorial refusal and the effervescence of desire. This fictitious world is not that of the society of the rich and the great, but at the same time it is a world *which was not granted* to Jean-Jacques's loving heart: it is a chimerical land built by his imagination and his memory. Rousseau

fills the vacuum; he sidetracks his regrets; he repairs the injustices of destiny. This novel is both the possible universe juxtaposed by Rousseau to the barrenness of Parisian salons, and the sentimental fable he invents in order to fill an inner want. Once more, a double negation is at work.

We will find this double negation in the book itself. Saint-Preux, arrived from Vevey to Paris, describes without any satisfaction the life of the city: his letters echo the accusation that is the basis of the entire work. As for Julie, apparently happy and reigning over a circle of beautiful souls, she feels an unexplainable lack—"the ennui of happiness": "the land of chimera is the only one in this world in which it is worth living, and such is the nothingness of human affairs that, outside of the Being sufficient unto himself, nothing is beautiful other than what is not."⁴²

Identifying with his characters, Rousseau succeeds in endowing his refusals, his aspirations, and his unappeased desires with a quality of veracity which will find its echo in the reader's identification. Rousseau had shown them what they believed to be authentic passion, veracious language, and true happiness, and nothing seemed more desirable to them than leaving their universe of conventions and lies in order to live as did Saint-Preux and Julie. They could imagine themselves liberated from all hindrances at the cost of a change of habits and surroundings, a trip to enchanting shores. For the contrasting world was not too far away. One did not have to change continents; one had hardly to change countries, for regeneration could take place almost next door. The idyllic softness of the landscape of Clarens allowed the accuser to call himself citizen of a land both real (marked on the map of the West) and conceptual. His indictment was thus authorized and justified. In its love letters or its sublime reasoning, the strength of feeling imposed its law, the accuser presented the credentials of the other land, the foreign kingdom of which he was the ambassador. The Rousseauian fiction, from which the character of the wicked is absent, bears witness to the purity of the soul of its author. It carries an apologetic value and at the same time confirms the merits of the action undertaken against the corrupt world.

The alternative universe developed by Rousseau is that where virtuous endurance is shaped (the *Emile*); it is that of a community based on reciprocity of consciences (*Contrat social*); it is that of the

transparency of hearts (*La Nouvelle Héloïse*). One can see what is important to the accuser: not only to legitimate his refusal of the world, but in addition to testify that his blows against the vices of the time were not motivated by hatred. Everything happens as if Rousseau wanted to put the accent on the qualities of softness, harmony, and transparency of his alternative universe in order that the violence of his accusatorial gesture be above suspicion.⁴³ To be resolutely beyond evil, one needs to have prevented evil from creeping into the denunciation itself of society's ills. Hypersensitive as he was, Rousseau feared that his dissenting attitude might be taken as selfish resentment. When, alone against all, one lodges a complaint against injustice and error, one can be accused of being moved by unjust hate, by unsociability, by desire to harm. If Rousseau admits (albeit with difficulty) to having known excesses of "bile" and "humor" or sometimes melancholia, he defends himself against the charge of being a misanthrope.⁴⁴ How did he come to feel that Diderot's famous words, "Only the wicked is alone,"⁴⁵ although casually inserted in a fictional dialogue, were directed against him? To him they were unbearable and deeply painful because they totally reversed the moral relationship in which he wanted to establish himself before the world: that of censor, solitary prophet, exempt from the sins he denounces, bearer of the just word. In Rousseau's time, these classic roles could only be imitated, assumed, without an institutional foundation. They were literary roles. For an ex-vagabond, the entry through the printed word, that is, through "verbal magic," into the functions of religious preacher, Roman censor, can only be accompanied by an inward guilt which will require constantly renewed assurance and confirmation. One should produce proofs and show that one really *is* someone who has the right to hold such discourses. "I always sustained the part badly," writes Rousseau in regard to the "cynical and sarcastic" tone he had adopted "out of shame" at the moment of his great reform.⁴⁶ The suspicion of charlatanism, hypocrisy, and trickery can always be raised—from within or without. This is the type of amenity that men of letters exchanged at that time. (Rousseau calls Tronchin a trickster; Voltaire, insulting Rousseau, calls him a "charlatan." Only Rameau's nephew, eschewing the pose of nobility, calls himself harshly madman and buffoon.) However, in his private life—concubinage with Thérèse, abandoned children—Rousseau knows that, despite his justifications, the being

does not coincide with the appearance: he does not resemble the virtuous fathers of ancient Rome. And one knows that later on Rousseau will cease to claim virtue, which demands an effort he feels unable to make. It will be enough for him to claim pure and natural spontaneity, goodness, innocence, or in any case nonmalfeasance which can go along with weakness.⁴⁷

Let us formulate a hypothesis. Rousseau, wanting above all to escape evil, can trade, without essential damage, the attitude of accuser for that of accused. The accusatorial attitude implies an expenditure of aggressive energy entailing the obligation to face a double exigency: the legitimacy of the accusation and purity of intentions. The accuser must necessarily place himself in an active position. He must exhibit his virile virtue not only by the courage of his refusal, but by the production, through the effort of reflection, of the images or the positive intellectual models that he adopts as alternatives. The work is considerable: to formulate principles, to deduce consequences, to go back to presocial man in order to establish the fundamental pact and, through a necessary line of arguments logically articulated, to build the other city (or in the case of *Emile*, the other man). This effort to structure in their theoretical links or their affective climate a mother country (Geneva), a place populated with beautiful souls (Clarens), a human model (Emile), a religious conviction (profession de foi du Vicaire Savoyard), Rousseau accomplished with a sense of duty, of fixing his ideas as he had prescribed for himself. But he stayed as a third party between these works and the hostile world, obliged to take upon himself the proof of the validity of his "sad and great system,"⁴⁸ obliged to endow it with enough attraction and veracity to make of it a universe competitive with the unsatisfactory world. At the height of his theoretical construction, he always felt that he was himself in question in the system he was developing. He had to vouch for it, and in return the system brought him a confirmation. A rapport of reciprocal affirmation was thus established, but once the system was considered complete, a retreat into the person, the subjective "source," was possible. It became permissible to give up the effort, the reflective activity.⁴⁹ It became possible to abandon the roles of tutor, legislator, moral guide, which had constituted so many variations of the paternal figure. And since the initial accusation led to putting the *I* of the accuser in a conspicuous position and since this *I*

neither could nor wanted to leave the scene, the only thing left for him to do was to retreat into passive innocence: to abandon himself to nature's first movement, to live as an "automaton" in immediate spontaneity.⁵⁰ Relaxation, surrender, were permitted. Instead of the system and the articulation of his distinct constituency, instead of the idealized laws of the city of the father, life in nature permitted the achievement, in all purity, of an ideal of fusion in which the return to the mother was so perfectly accomplished that Rousseau sometimes found himself feminized. His sense of persecution made necessary his escape, his search for shelter and asylum. It permitted him to enjoy this type of happiness, while by suffering from feelings of persecution he paid the required price. The benefit of the system was not annulled: a deserved rest could rightfully follow work. Rousseau would now be able to transfer into autobiography, into personal justification, the religious element that led him to sacralize the city's image. Just as the earthly city in the system had taken the place of God's city, autojustification in the face of universal accusation was going to take the place of the process of grace.⁵¹

The persecution that Rousseau feels building around himself is multiform. It is assuredly the expected retort, either open or covert, from those whose interests he has attacked and whose convictions he has shocked: "He undoubtedly expected a cruel revenge from all those whom truth offends. He knew that grandees, viziers, gentlemen of the robe, financiers, doctors, priests, philosophers, and all people who make society a real highway robbery, would never forgive him for having seen through them and showed them as they were The harsh truths that he spoke, although he did so in general terms, were darts that make in the heart wounds that never heal."⁵² But according to Rousseau himself, this counterstroke ought to have brought only measures, logically justified—"hatred" and "all kinds of persecutions."⁵³ However, Rousseau considers himself to be the victim of much worse treatment, the causes of which are to him unfathomable: "disgrace," "infamy," "defamation." The counter-attack by the world, as he experiences it, not only makes him someone persecuted by public opinion and guilty of having challenged the institutions and their representatives; it also penetrates his moral self, the inner integrity which was the very basis for the merit of his accusation. It points to the evil inherent in the very source from which originates the just world he had imagined in order to contrast

it to the corrupt one. The accusation, therefore, weighs on the original ground of the conscience, on the center where the "voice of conscience" is born. Since defamation, as he experiences it, touches not only his moral quality (he is called wicked) and his morals (he is called a poisoner, a satyr, a thief, a "*vérole*"), it essentially touches upon his very identity. It questions the bond between his person and his writings; it unties the relation of reciprocal testimony through which the person and the work proved their goodness one by the other. Generalizing on the evil comments actually directed against him, Rousseau feels that he is robbed of his work by being taken for a plagiarist, or that anonymous books which are not his are imputed to him. In other words, Rousseau is convinced that the league of his persecutors denies him the very thing on which he wanted to build a new authority, superior to all accepted authorities—that is his loving heart, obedient to the primal movements of nature, his inner sentiment spontaneously enlightened by a reason attuned to the universal order. Now, the result of this defamation of which Rousseau reads the signs everywhere, is not, on his part, to battle against criticism. The authorities' surveillance prevents him from doing this, and he probably intends to fight only to affirm his true identity, to save himself from the emptiness in which he would be engulfed were the testimony of his work to be suppressed. Hence, he has to resume his writing in order to multiply the proofs of his innocence, to authenticate his writings and their salutary purpose. In short, the suspicion which he feels hanging over him compels him to work in order to regain the image of himself which has been stolen from him and disfigured. He will have to offer a new expression of his true self, by means of the autobiographical narration (*Confessions*), the dialogued apology (*Dialogues*), the dreaming improvisations (*Rêveries*). Thus, the accusation necessitates a defense, the resources of which derive from the narcissistic relationship to the self and which will justify its pleasures.

From then on, he is able to look at his role of accuser as a finished phase of his existence. He no longer has to prove to the world that the violence of his word is just. "Innocent and persecuted," he himself endures an unjust violence. He deals solely with himself, is solely concerned with himself, waiting for God's judgment and that of posterity.

He remains alone, changed into the persecuted, against them all, the accusers. The initial situation has been reversed. The antinomy is not abolished. The accusation simply comes from the other side. The paranoid ideas which insistently haunt many of Rousseau's late pages show, in a writer who has given the first sign of a certain type of accusatory thought in Europe, how far that thought can reach. To accuse universal evil and exempt oneself from it can only lead to one of the two following consequences. Either one feels persecuted in return by the "wicked," resigning oneself to that and seeking in intimate transparency the consolation from all injustices—this is the passive, masochistic solution, to which Rousseau's preference tends to direct itself. Or one responds through violence, engaging in the fight against the evil world in the name of justice and innocence, whose demands one believes oneself alone to know—this is the aggressive, sadistic, terrorist solution. In both cases, the accuser (or the group of accusers) and the accused (or the group of attacked) arrogate to themselves a privileged role: they are in possession of the light and the transparency, whereas everything around them remains in darkness. The choice of the paradoxical antinomic rapport with reality determines in advance the psychopathic radicalization of the relationship with the rest of mankind. The revolutionary period, and then modern history, have only given to the consequences already developed in Rousseau's destiny the opportunity to become a reality through large-scale events. (I would like to add the following to avoid being considered as one of those who, without fearing anachronism, claim that the *Contrat social* is a totalitarian work: this view is neither prefigured nor prepared in Rousseau's doctrine. It is to be read in his attitude.)

The reverie, in which Rousseau finally takes refuge, no longer has the mission of providing a comparative world which could be of value to all men and could replace the effective order or disorder of human relationships. The world of reverie now has a substitutive value for Jean-Jacques alone; it replaces all the joys of trust and communication denied to him. The man who had raised himself to God, as we have seen, in order to condemn mankind will rekindle the same enthusiasm, the same high-soaring élan toward the divine, but with a different aim: to escape the suit which mankind unfairly is bringing against him. The imaginary response first elaborated against

the world finally becomes the compensation which allows the persecuted to find refuge outside the world, far from his persecutors' reach.

Is it necessary to insist here on the contemporary phenomena which seem closely copied on the model offered by Rousseau's experience? The protest addressed against a world conceived as unjust is reversed into a passionate attention to all that remains for the individual when the world massively plots against him. It is because Rousseau first wrote his two accusatory *Discours* and the *Contrat social* that he could become the author of the fifth *Rêverie*, dedicated to the memories of his ecstasies on the shores of the lake of Bienne. The idea of rejection is the common term: it can be conjugated actively or passively. The city of the *Contrat* is the theoretical image necessary to the one who rejects the actual society in the name of another political organization. His turning toward nature's scenery, his fusion with nature, his listening to the pure "feeling of existence" are the only goodness remaining to the one who has been rejected by the society of men. The individual becomes a universe unto himself; he discovers the unknown riches of his body, of his memory, of his fantasies. *Accuser*, rejecting injustice and suspicious authorities, Rousseau is the first to fill with a sacred fascination the theoretical model of a society or of an education able to repair harm done. *Accused*, seeking within himself justification and compensation, he is again the first to show the full range of autobiography, in which a life's truth is expressed in the "chain of one's secret feelings."⁵⁴ If Rousseau is still alive for us, it is because, through accusation and rejection conjugated actively and passively, he has formulated two important modern myths which have retained all their power: the myth of a social universe in which man, depending solely on himself, encounters his fellowmen in a perfect transparency of hearts and the myth of an individual experience so rich that it can replace all other possessions.

Thus, Rousseau's ideas and Rousseau's destiny still remain provocative. We feel that we can test on him—notwithstanding the two centuries that have elapsed—the crucial ethical problems of modern man. Dissent, individualism, cravings for a better social organization, which, if realized, would subordinate the individual to the community—these are some of the puzzling aspects which nowadays attract endless commentaries on Rousseau. I see no predictable end, for instance, to the discussion on the narrow relationship between guilt

and the two mythical images of the fullness of the social body and the fullness of individual existence. As with projective psychological tests, the way our time interprets Rousseau could help a judicious observer to define today's major intellectual issues.

ENDNOTES

This article was translated by Jacqueline Brovender.

- ¹Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Les Confessions*, in vol. 1 of *Oeuvres complètes de Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, ed. Bernard Gagnebin and Marcel Raymond (Paris: Gallimard, 1959–1969, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade), 495. This expression is to be found in book 10, where Rousseau tells of his writing of the *Lettre à d'Alembert sur les spectacles*, which marks a change of tone: "Until then, indignant virtue took the place of inspiration." A few months before his illumination on the road to Vincennes in early 1749, Rousseau writes to Madame de Warens and tells her of his mood when writing his articles on music, primarily directed against Rameau, for the *Encyclopédie*: "I defend myself against the people who have wronged me; bile gives me strength, and even wit and science: 'Anger is enough and itself an inspiration.'" This verse is from Boileau, who remembered Juvénal's famous verse: *facit indignatio versum*. (Note that subsequent citations of works of Rousseau are references to the Pléiade edition.)
- ²*Ibid.*, 351. Elsewhere, Rousseau mentions six years.
- ³*Ibid.*, 416.
- ⁴*Ibid.*, 417.
- ⁵*Ibid.*, 416.
- ⁶*Ibid.*, 417 (translation taken from J. M. Cohen, *The Confessions of Jean-Jacques Rousseau* [Baltimore, Penguin Classics, 1954], 388—J.B.)
- ⁷Diderot, *Oeuvres esthétiques* (Paris: Garnier, 1959), 695.
- ⁸*Les Confessions*, 495–96.
- ⁹*Discours*, 3:29.
- ¹⁰Cf. Pierre-Maurice Masson, *La religion de Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, vol. I (Paris, 1916), 259 ff. about the rebuttals elicited by Voltaire's *Le Mondain*, which praised luxury and refined life.
- ¹¹*Correspondance complète de Rousseau*, ed. R. A. Leigh, 3:22 (anonymous letter to Jacob Vernes).
- ¹²Cited by Etienne Dumont. Cf. Louis-J. Courtois, "Rousseau jugé par Etienne Dumont. Pages oubliées et pages inédites," *Annales J.-J. Rousseau*, 22:154–203.
- ¹³*Confessions*, 1:25–26 (Cohen, 34–35).
- ¹⁴*Discours*, 30 (translation taken from R. D. Masters, *The First and Second Discourses* [New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964], 64—J.B.).
- ¹⁵Pascal, *Pensées*, ed. Philippe Sellier (Paris, 1976), 46.
- ¹⁶Malebranche, *Traité de morale* (Paris: Vrin, 1966), 35.
- ¹⁷Fénelon, *Oeuvres complètes*, vol. 6 (Paris, 1850), 56.
- ¹⁸*Ibid.*, 57.
- ¹⁹Massillon, *Oeuvres*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1877), 670.
- ²⁰*Discours*, 1:26.

²¹*Discours*, 3:45.

²²In *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: La Transparence et l'obstacle*, new ed. (Paris, 1976). This ideal is to be found everywhere in Rousseau. It is particularly obvious in the *Lettre à d'Alembert sur les spectacles*, where Rousseau contrasts the traditional theater with the public festivals where civic life celebrates its own apotheosis. As in the case of his accusation of "arts and sciences," Rousseau renews against the theater an indictment made previously by theologians, but offers a political alternative. See Jonas A. Barish, "The Antitheatricalism of Jean-Jacques Rousseau," *Stanford French Review* (1)(2)(Fall 1977):167-90.

²³The idea of compensation is one of the constant themes of the *Rêveries*, Rousseau's last work.

²⁴Ernst Cassirer, *Das Problem Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie, vol. 41 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1970), 29-37.

²⁵This bias which is today that of the accusatorial thought "of the left" is the opposite of the misuse by the conservative thought of the notion of human nature. It calls upon the permanent nature of things, the constant limits of human nature in order to justify relations of authority historically determined and essentially modifiable. It is illusory and misleading to try to protect some contingent social structures in the name of an eternal human nature. But it is no less deceitful to feed the grievances against the existing social rule by a metaphysical claim which no change of social rule could satisfy. In both cases, one rightfully can see an "ideology" at work—that is, a system of arguments intended to protect the validity of an irrational interest.

²⁶Rousseau draws up the list in the beginning of the third part of the *Dialogues*, 1: 917-23.

²⁷*Discours*, 3:14-15.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 133.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 164.

³⁰This verse of Ovid (*Tristia*, X, 37) is cited in a letter of his youth (*Correspondance complète*, ed. R. A. Leigh, 1:139). Rousseau will use it as epigraph for the *Muse allobroge*, the first *Discours* and the *Dialogues*. It must be compared with the motto which Rousseau will adopt later: *vitam impendere vero*.

³¹*Les Confessions*, 351.

³²*Ibid.*, 388-89 (Cohen, 362).

³³*Ibid.*, 376.

³⁴*Emile*, 4:241.

³⁵*Ibid.*

³⁶*Ibid.*, 242.

³⁷*Ibid.*, 243.

³⁸The confrontation of the two pupils is developed in book 4 of *Emile*, 512-15. The expression "exhibit of comparison" is used by Rousseau in order to define his own portrait as he plans to write it. *Ebauches des Confessions*, 1149.

³⁹*Emile*, 243.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 837.

⁴¹*Lettre à Christophe de Beaumont*, 1:935.

⁴²*La Nouvelle Héloïse*, 2:693.

⁴³In his remarks about Rousseau's style, Etienne Dumont underlines the fact that, unlike Fénelon, always unvaryingly "sweet," or La Bruyère, "nearly always bitter," Rousseau knows how to contrast styles and develop a contrast of

"severity and softness." To go one step farther, one can add that Rousseau needed to be gentle in order to make the strength of his accusatorial refusals believed: the moments of gentleness reveal that, at their *source*, Jean-Jacques's feelings are pure and loving. Louis-J. Courtois, "Rousseau jugé par Etienne Dumont. Pages oubliées et pages inédites," *Annales J.-J. Rousseau*, 22:154–203.

⁴⁴See Rousseau, *Confessions*, 369, *Dialogues*, 788, *Lettres à Malesherbes*, 1131, for example.

⁴⁵*Confessions*, 455, and *Dialogues*, 789.

⁴⁶*Confessions*, 369.

⁴⁷*Dialogues*, 824.

⁴⁸*Préface d'une seconde lettre à Bordes*, 3:105.

⁴⁹Cf. "Jean-Jacques Rousseau et le péril de la réflexion," in Jean Starobinski, *L'oeil vivant* (Paris, 1961), 91–188.

⁵⁰The expression appears several times in the second *Dialogue*.

⁵¹Cf. Hans Robert Jauss, "Religiöser Ursprung und ästhetische Emanzipation der Individualität," in *Ästhetische Erfahrung und literarische Hermeneutik*, vol. 1 (Munich, 1977), 200–11.

⁵²Rousseau, *Dialogues*, 926–27.

⁵³*Ibid.*, 926.

⁵⁴*Ebauches des Confessions*, 1:1149.

Stanley Hoffmann

Fragments Floating in the Here and Now

Is there a Europe, was there a past, and will there be a future?

or

The Lament of a Transplanted European

I

LET US TAKE ANY WESTERN EUROPEAN NATION in the nineteenth century—say, France, the one I know best. At any given moment, a visitor could have heard vigorous discussions of its past: the nature, flaws, and benefits of the old regime, the causes of its fall, the respective virtues and crimes of the different phases of the Revolution, the reasons for the restless and unsuccessful quest for political stability that followed it, the effect on the nation of the dramatic fracture in its history brought about by the Revolution, the lasting impact of Bonapartism. All of these questions were constantly examined along clear-cut ideological lines and were reassessed by each generation of historians. History played a large part in the school curriculum, and the nation's past was imprinted thereby on the minds of its future citizens. "At age thirteen," says Jean-Marie Domenach—now in his mid-fifties—"my image of France was solidly formed. It linked the recent glory of the fatherland to Greek and Roman antiquity, with the help of classical humanities, which

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consisted in. . . an aesthetic and moral impregnation."¹ At the same time, intellectuals and politicians were offering various models of the future. Even a society as keen on tight self-protection against economic and social upheavals as that of nineteenth-century France never stopped arguing about what the future might bring and, above all, never stopped believing that it was ultimately up to its citizens to shape that future—whether by the restoration of a beneficial past or by the realization of one or another vision of progress. What struck observers most was the depth and multiplicity of disagreements. But the concern with the past and the future—the conviction that the latter would emerge from acts inspired by a proper reconsideration of the past the belief that past and future were inextricably linked, less by historical determinism than through one's own consciousness of them; the idea that one was seeking one's future in one's stand toward the past and that the future ought to be the enactment of the lessons learned from the past—all this seemed perfectly obvious and appropriate.

It may, therefore, appear obvious and equally appropriate to ask whether the same questions are raised in Western Europe today. But when its citizens consult the mirror on the wall to find reflections from the past or intimations of the future, they find a broken mirror and a blurred image. For Europe remains a virtuality, the past is mere spectacle, and the future is a riddle. Why this is so takes us into the story of postwar Europe's political, social, and cultural transformation, as well as of Europe's role in the world.

II

The reasons for Western Europe's failure to coalesce have been described so often—particularly by the author of this essay—that they do not have to be repeated here.² The economic success story of postwar Europe, before and even in spite of the recession (success in terms of GNP, trade, per capita income, etc.); the cohesiveness of the EEC despite such serious challenges as Gaullism in the 1960s and the economic storms of the 1970s; the line of anxious applicants waiting to be admitted; the network of agreements that associate large numbers of non-European states with the Community; the coming election of its Parliament by universal suffrage—none of these facts invalidates my point. Western Europe remains a collection of largely

self-encased nation-states. The various governments of Western Europe have found it useful to establish common institutions to deal with their common problems for the following reasons: most of them are advanced industrial societies and have open economies; they are all sandwiched, so to speak, between a potential foe endowed with massive military might and the only ally that can balance and deter Russia's might (yet the latter often exhibits an economic dynamism, and makes economic, monetary, or military demands that risk overwhelming its partners); and for the most part they have preserved the ties with their former colonies, whose development may now serve their own interests. But the basic unit of concern remains the nation-state, however inadequate.

There was, to be sure, a collective *projet* at the outset; its very ambiguity about ends—federalism or confederacy? a strong entity or a contribution to global solutions? free trade or common *dirigisme*? a new power bloc in the world or an exercise in transcending power politics?—helped it grow in the beginning. But later, when each new step seemed to require clarification of the final goals, its ambiguous nature began to plague it. The differential effects of outside pulls—from the US, the USSR, the so-called South, the monetary crises, the recession—have kept the Community members apart and forced the Commission and the Council to spend most of their time in trying to keep them all in the same boat, rather than in charting a course for it. No sooner was the battle provoked by de Gaulle's insistence on defining their course his way ended by his retirement, than a new setback hit the champions of *relance*: Western Europe was buffeted by new, global problems—energy, currency, the quest for a new international economic order. Their solution not only was, as usual, envisaged in different terms by the Community's members, but also (as in the earlier and lasting case of defense) did not seem capable of being adequately provided by the existing institutions and within the framework of Western Europe. Broader institutions, often dominated by the US, or a global framework, as in the North-South talks, seem to make more sense. But these approaches are a kind of devaluation of the EEC and seem to provide new reasons for each member to play a separate game. As J.-F. Deniau, a seasoned practitioner and faithful advocate of European cooperation puts it,³ Europe, when it speaks with one voice, has little to say and, anyhow, sounds *dépassée*. It is only when the foe or the dominant ally seems

to push its advantages or privileges too hard—Stalin in the early 1950s, Kissinger in the summer of 1973, the Carter administration in recent months—that a reflex of self-defense throws the Western Europeans together. As soon as the pressure gets lighter, however, internal divergences and separate priorities regain the upper hand.

Es ist eine alte Geschichte. But it has gotten worse, not better. There are several reasons. Paradoxically, the greater the scope of the Community's activities, the more complicated the agreements become: each area is in the hands of technicians and specialists who excel in the display of obstacles. Progress requires cross-issue bargaining; but the latter, in turn, requires a common sense of direction. Summit meetings, on the other hand, merely record a desire to overcome obstacles and a decision to send each issue back to its experts—the vigilant guardians of national differences. Secondly, the oil crisis, the recession, and the expansion of the Community from six to nine have sharpened heterogeneity and deepened the gap between the most efficient and least unstable—Bonn—and the others, as well as among the others themselves. Thirdly, the generation of true believers—the founding fathers of European integration, many of whom were American—has no heirs. Its successors are pragmatic. They do not doubt the advantages that cooperation, overall, brings to their nations or the augmented influence that “speaking as part of Europe” can give them. But they are determined to measure whether in each instance the benefits really exceed the costs; and precisely because they take the usefulness and existence of the Community for granted, they are not overly worried by temporary setbacks or general aimlessness. As one French writer put it in discussing the fate of syndicalism, one has moved from the age of apostles to that of administrators.

There is a difference between a corporation and a club, between a government and a committee. Europe may still be seen as a giant from afar, especially by those who, through some irony de Gaulle would have bitterly enjoyed, mistake its function for his vision.⁴ Looked at closely, however, Europe is a great idea that has been tamed, leashed, and co-opted. Just as in French public affairs every scheme for decentralization has ended up absorbed into the traditional administrative patterns, the revolutionary idea of a united Europe has ended up routinized. As Deniau, again, puts it, its Commission has not become a substitute for the governments but a

supplementary one. The European movement grew out of a particular historical situation and represented a broad aspiration. But this longing, and the cunning procedures Monnet devised for its fulfillment, have not succeeded in creating a common will. Europe, today as in the 1950s, is a necessity and a possibility; but it is not a will, it is no longer much of an ideal, and, as a result, it may end up being, like so many necessities, a missed opportunity. All too often, the Community forum has become a dumping ground for problems that are insoluble in the nation or the region or even within the narrow Western European framework. Periodically, the dwindling "Europeans," the worried Eurocrats and national statesmen who measure the limits of the nation-state, seek an injection of fresh blood: the *relance* of Messina after the debacle of EDC, the *relance* of the Hague after de Gaulle, and now, after the buffeting of the past five years, renewed monetary cooperation and the popular election of the Parliament. But the danger this last move entails is not at all the realization of Michel Debré's nightmare: the sudden assertion of a supranational will in which a majority of Atlanticized Europeans override and overwhelm France's national interests (with the support of consenting and blinded French parliamentarians). Rather it is the opposite, a demonstration—either of the strength of the particular over the united (whether the particular takes the form of a transnational interest group or of sharp national differences tearing apart the fabric of transnational parties) or of the persistence of collective impotence (manifested through common stands that would either be resisted by the governments—as in the old Council of Europe—or, in matters of diplomacy and defense, would consist in mere deploration). In other words, the model may well be not a States-General turning into a National Assembly at the initiative of the Third Estate in June 1789 but the Parliament of the Fourth Republic.

There is no need to indulge once more in the *No Exit*-like attempt to apportion guilt and blame. Was it the fault of Western Europe's situation (another name for it, especially among French analysts, being the United States)? Or was it rather the failure of Europe's consciousness, its inability to shape a *projet* and to overcome the situation? It matters little, except insofar as each side's faults have become an alibi for the other's. (Why should the US pay more attention to a bunch of nations that fails to get together to "share the burden" or to carry their own weight? How can the Europeans do

great things when the US leaves them no breathing space, treats them as dependents, refuses to discipline its economy, or uses the pretext of free enterprise to crowd out European industries, etc.?) What does matter is the convergent effect of progressive disappointment and habituation to the EEC as it is: since there is neither ground for sudden worry nor reason for much hope, what has, throughout, been at the root of (partial) failure—that is, the resilience of the nation-state (whose failings explain the need for and the partial success of cooperation)—is more prominent than ever. Wherever “Europe” was at first seen as almost a way to salvation, the loss of faith is most visible. In West Germany—because it has recovered status and influence so hugely—the European avenue, while economically advantageous, is by no means so essential as it once seemed. In Italy the domestic crisis leaves no room for the old myth of Europe as the undoer of national knots. In both cases, Europe remains necessary—as an outlet for German goods and a cloak for Germany’s naked strength and as a source of material and moral help in Italy’s lonely ordeal. But we are dealing with a utilitarian Europe. In France, the original faith has been eroded by years of “theological” disputes. If it sometimes seems as if it is most alive among British Europeanists, it is only because they are neophytes who have just entered the temple; their own representatives within behave far less like high priests than like bargainers closing deals in the City.

For the European enterprise to succeed, two closely connected things were necessary: (1) a kind of collective decision to repudiate or transcend the separate national pasts that had pitted the European nations against one another so often and (2) a collective determination to build a common future, a new European society and culture, and a new role in the world. The paradox, or the tragedy, of postwar Europe lies in this fact: if these common decisions are nowhere to be found, it is not because each nation-state has clung so fiercely to its separate vision of its past and its future, but because it has lost touch with the past and the future. To repudiate or transcend the past supposes that it is sufficiently alive to be resented or to inspire a will to break with it and to start afresh. Otherwise it is seen as so much dead weight, so irrelevant to the new situation that it has to be given up, traded in for a deliberately built new future. Shaping such a common future requires a kind of faith and political creativity—which is precisely what has been missing.

III

A superficial observer might marvel at the way in which the Europeans seem to have left behind the feuds and alienations of their past. Whatever happened to hereditary enmities? Spain, so marginal to European history for so long, except in the tragedy of its civil war, hurries to restore the old connection. If Northern Ireland fascinates, it is not only because of the Irish; it is also because there is something anachronistic about such hatreds and passions in Western Europe. And yet, if the hostilities entailed by separate pasts appear to have evaporated, the separate pasts have not; each European country is still concerned only with its own history, insofar as its people look back at all. Attempts at producing common history textbooks have succeeded only in smoothing the edges. To be sure, scientific history often deals with someone else's past—the best history of modern France in a long time is that of Theodore Zeldin—but in only a few countries is there a tradition of transnational investigation. The French have thrown little light on Germany's past, and Elie Halévy has had no successor. Popular history and the mass media deal almost exclusively with the national past. The media, of course, sometimes report on a neighbor's present—communism in Italy, for instance, is of concern to the French. But generally, television delves into a neighbor's past only when it is connected to its own national experience: German television showed *The Sorrow and the Pity* and a recent film on Pierre Laval because of Germany's involvement in wartime France.

The fundamental questions therefore are: How is the national past being examined and what parts of it are considered important? The two queries are linked, for what is striking is a concentration on the recent past and a way of looking at it that I would call escapist. Here again, the media are informative. Television, the movies, and popular history have mass-produced stories about the troubled past of the 1930s and 1940s. What could be more normal, given its traumatic nature? The parades of the 1930s and the shadows of the war years fill French screens; Mussolini and Hitler obsess the Italians and the Germans; the British endlessly contemplate their finest hours; and Spanish novels and films, before Franco's death, posed poetic or

picaresque riddles about and around the civil war. Does this preoccupation demonstrate a willingness to come to terms with a harrowing experience and to derive once again, for present and future behavior, painful lessons from it? I wish I could be sure. Instead I find in it something far softer and more superficial, perhaps because much of this quest is driven by little more than curiosity about the behavior of people who are still alive and present, or nostalgia about one's own earlier years. (Thus what seems like a turning to the past is really little more than an attempt to catch the beginnings of the present before they fade away.) Perhaps a deeper look, a confrontation with the tough moral questions raised by these grim years, is still too painful or (as the Occupation is for France) too divisive; nations, like individuals, repress the humiliating and the harrowing and would rather look at the picturesque than ponder shame or guilt. And so, what we get—in the case of Spain, for example—is a longing for humane normalcy rather than a search for the reasons behind past inhumanity. Sometimes, as in Germany, there is a fascination with now-incomprehensible phenomena of mass hysteria and evil that has very little to do with soul searching. One looks at the spectacle as if what happened was either a collective hypnosis perpetrated by one extraordinary man or a march behind the pied piper undertaken by only a part of the people, most of whom followed him into the abyss. Sometimes, as in France, we encounter an intellectual appetite for exercises in ambiguity; it is another way of putting distance between oneself and one's past. The German way tells us that what happened was exceptional, and from the exceptional there is little to learn. The French way tells us that each of us, like Lacombe Lucien, could have been a resister or a collaborationist or, like some of the characters in *The Sorrow and the Pity*, a hero, a criminal, or a coward; this is a subtle way of debunking the past, or reducing it to a moral shrug. Sometimes, as in England and in Italy, one reenacts the heroic hours—the Battle of Britain or the Italian Resistance—a melancholy yet exalting way of escaping from the sadness of the present and of reassuring ourselves about our highest potential. Thus one tries to bolster one's self-esteem: it has not been all bad; indeed some of it has been glorious. But when one finally realizes that one has been drugging oneself, what a sense of fall—witness *We All Loved Each Other So Much* or *The Glittering Prizes*.

For such concern with the recent past to transcend curiosity and spectacle, one needs elites—governments, intellectuals, educators—determined to connect the present and the whole of that recent past—not just its heroic or inspiring features, but also the ugly ones—in order that they may never be reproduced or that they may be finally erased. This is not what we find. Governments, politicians, those who are loosely called opinion leaders, have been willfully selective or evasive. They have either (like the British) diverted their people from looking at their present or (like Adenauer) protected them from their past by plunging them into the imperatives of the present. (Even scholars have occasionally behaved like hurt citizens when a foreigner has revealed an unwelcome truth: Robert Paxton's fine book on Vichy France⁵ was not well received by an establishment that prefers to see in Vichy a set of grievous, often well-meaning blunders rather than a deeply rooted logic of reactionary defeatism.) It is easier to tell oneself that moral choice is a matter of temper and circumstance, that one has been heroic, or that what made one evil is gone, than to tell people that their recent performance has often been shameful or that their recent valor has not prepared them at all for the very different challenges of the present (and indeed may have bled them white). To proclaim the former is easily dismissed as masochism or as an obstacle to getting people to improve their current lot, for one does not inspire others by rubbing their noses into past dirt. To proclaim the latter is equally discouraging—it rubs their noses into present dirt. *Lacombe Lucien*, with its romantic yet degrading love affair between the Jewish girl and the young collaborationist, was far more popular than the stark and unsparing *Black Thursday*, which showed the French police rounding up Jews for the Germans. As for the intellectuals, while some—a Böll, a Grass—have done what they could, many others, like Sartre, have used the terrible experiences of the recent past only as demonstrations of universal timeless paroxysmic dilemmas. Such a paradoxical, and in the end narcissistic, contemplation of one's finest or most villainous hours, such a variety of escapes, however useful in the present, have not only amounted to a refusal to draw any valid lessons; they have also often incited the next generation to rebel against their too easily satisfied parents, whether the rebellion takes the form of mere cynicism or of actual terrorism—the gentler or the stronger form of nihilism. But this connection has not been and still is not widely recognized.

At least the recent past is alive, if only as a horror show, a pageant, or a pep pill. What is striking is the growing disconnection from the more distant past. Of course, scholars continue to study it, often with great verve, new methods, and original interpretations. But their works rarely reach the general public, except when the authors have, thanks to television, become fashionable or objects of a cult (in which case their books are bought because of the author's fame rather than read because of their substance). One can sometimes hear learned writers arguing fiercely on the radio or the television about bygone events or personalities (one of the most heated debates I ever heard on France's famed *Dossiers de l'écran* concerned the fate of poor little Louis XVII). But these programs deal with the froth or the scum, not with the waves and their movements. The past is becoming an object of erudition or diversion, rather than a part of one's own being, through family or school transmission. What the French called *le passé vécu*, the experienced past, is displaced by the past as a product of specialists, a consumer product, a subject matter for scholars, or a spectacle.

One might be tempted to look for the explanation in the process of democratization. In traditional societies the elites derive their authority from the past and preserve it through the maintenance of customs and values (such as deference) whose very purpose is to delay change and to safeguard hierarchies. In democratic societies, preservation of the rites and habits of the past needs justification; the individual defines himself through his achievements and demands that authority be grounded either on his consent or on its own accomplishments; no democratic generation believes it has either much of a debt to its predecessors or much of a duty to do as they have done. If, as Tocqueville argued, the drive toward equality is the motor of modern society, the matrix of modern history, then the past always risks being rejected, both because it is a prehistory of inequality and because, if it were allowed to become a straitjacket slipped by each generation onto its successor, it would cripple that dogma of perfectibility, that belief in progress, which Tocqueville described as one of the biggest differences between democratic and aristocratic peoples.

But we must beware of such sweeping generalizations. For as we look around us, we find democratic societies in which *le passé vécu* has not receded. It may well be that the ideal type of democratization (the one Tocqueville tried to erect in the second volume of his great

work) entails a destruction of ties, both to the past and between the members of that vast crowd of similar and equal men and women, restlessly left to their egoistic pursuits and panting to give themselves small, vulgar pleasures amidst the collapse of old beliefs and barriers.⁶ But in order for this severing of ties to happen, democratization must be accompanied by a number of other quite separate and distinct destructions. This is precisely the situation we find in postwar Europe—but not everywhere. Let us admit that democratization may push away the past; still, we find by looking at some countries (say, Switzerland) that the distance between past and present can be either quite small or, when countervailing forces temper the innate “present-orientation” of democracy without preventing democratization itself, can even be nonexistent. In most of Western Europe, however, we find not counterweights, but reinforcements.

The most obvious of these is the speed of social change, the sweeping away of old customs and rites, the disappearance or transformation of old occupations, the reshaping of class distinctions, the revolutions in mores and morals, and the collapse of traditional modes of social control, all of which have been catalogued by sociologists (serious and pop). Yesterday, the past was all around us, and the relative stability of the social order preserved the relevance and meaning of old and durable controversies about the past. As long as traditional institutions, practices of social ascent, economic structures, religious dogmas, and personal values persisted, there were people who wanted to preserve them and others who argued for change; both groups had to evaluate the past for their enterprise. Today, so much of the past is dead that there is little left of it to preserve. The old solidarities and communities are gone; often even the old landscapes, along with the rituals, customs, and costumes, have disappeared. The advocates of change argue from the inequalities and perils of the present. Yesterday, there were conservatives and reactionaries; the former were rooted in the past (and tried to prevent rapid change, political or economic); the latter thought there was enough still left of the blessed past to make it possible to bring back what had, unfortunately, been toppled. Today, a conservative is someone who merely wants to slow down the pace of change or (like Pompidou) to make inevitable changes smooth for the individual. The reactionary is the real radical: he argues—as a particular New

Right does in France—not for a return to the past, but on behalf of abstract principles—inequality between races and sexes, hierarchy and authority—which he is wise enough not to connect with any particular time or place.

The speed of change is one of the reasons the past seems so little relevant, but there is another related, but slightly different reason: a gradually growing sense of radical discontinuity. After the ordeals of the 1930s and the war years, the loss of the colonies, the seizure of political predominance by the superpowers, Western Europeans feel, more or less confusedly, that their normal historical development has been interrupted, that their past has been devalued, that their highest achievement—nationality—has plunged them into disaster followed by impotence, that they have moved from the age of self-determination to that in which the outside world determines their fate. The more distant past thus seems alien—not a prelude to the present; it is perhaps even a reproach.

This discontinuity is both expressed in and magnified by modern European historiography. Romantic history is gone, replaced by scientific history. Of course, romantic history was symbiotic with the nation-state; it was indeed a form and an agent of nationalism. It showed how the modern nation emerged from the tribes and the tribulations of the dark ages or triumphed over the machinations and oppression of foreigners. Present-day historians still operate, with a few grand exceptions like Braudel, within the limits of a nation; but the nation is no longer their object. The focus is often on culture and *mentalités*, but the approach is ethnographic, not political; it is the investigation of worlds we have lost, a sampling of vanished riches, not a celebration of how every stone fits into the national monument and every jewel into the nation's crown. Indeed, it often becomes an indictment of the nation, a kind of digging up of the bones of all those local cultures, cults, or customs that were killed by the national Molochs. It allows one to contrast the beautiful diversity of the past and the frantic ugliness of the present; but, unlike romantic history, it stresses both the discontinuity between past and present and the impossibility of reviving the dead. If, as one Frenchman put it, culture is what is left when everything else has been forgotten, the quest for bygone folkways is what is left when one wishes to forget everything else. Often, biography fills most of the gap opened by the demise of traditional history; it at least attracts many readers. But biography

too is a kind of denationalization: in romantic history, the hero was the people, suitably idealized or idolized; today we indulge either in the nostalgia of past peoples or in curiosity about individuals.

A third accompaniment of democratization has contributed to the demise of the past: ideological disillusionment. We never used to see the past "objectively." We looked at it through the lenses of ideologies—liberalism, socialism, varieties of conservatism, Christian democracy. (I shall come back to this point in my discussion of the future.) None of these old prisms seems sufficiently helpful for examining the present stage, whether it is the social scene—with its (often immigrated) *Lumpenproletariat*, its stratified and not-at-all pauperized working class, and its proliferating and largely salaried middle classes—or the political scene—with its welfare states in precarious coexistence with a free, but by no means competitive market, and its formidably organized and encrusted interest groups. The situation of the individual—part-time member or free rider of one of these groups, part-time rebel against state and groups, integrated yet overadministered citizen, or "marginalized" and helpless victim—is unlike any that these earlier visions of the meaning and movement of history predicted. Thus, through speed and the savagery of history, we have not simply lost touch with the world that is behind us; it also appears that this world said many things that turned out to be false and thus has nothing more to say to the average European. There are three ingredients in this disaffection. First, the predictions turned out to be incorrect, and the past as the matrix of all good things to come stands discredited. Second, there were too many predictions: it is as if they had canceled each other out or annihilated one another, as religious dogmas do when too many sects argue about their meaning. There never was a single common faith in Western Europe. The closer a country comes to having one—for instance in England—the less disconnected it is from the past (although there is some disconnection precisely because past creeds and present realities seem unrelated). The differing views of the past that, only yesterday, made history seem present to the French or the Italians, have, by losing much of their meaning in the present, devalued the past for them. Finally, some of the predictions were not merely wrong; they were murderous; they turned Europe into a field of ruins: "The ideologies of nation, race and class have fed the fire. Everything, or almost, is burnt out now."⁷ The fading away of the

past is part of a general repudiation of totalitarian ideologies and of the totalitarian implications of ideologies.

Why does the same disconnection not exist to any comparable degree in the United States? Because, I believe, the three destructive forces I have listed have not operated here. In the first place, social changes have been vast and often disruptive, but they have come as organic changes within an established democratic society rather than as the searing agents of democratization—that is, as the gravediggers of values, hierarchies, social patterns, and constellations that were still predemocratic, a mixture of fading aristocratic and narrowly bourgeois societies. Paradoxically, because there has been, ever since the nation's birth, an expectation of quick mutations—the shedding of old skins and the growing of shinier ones that will, in their turn, be discarded when progress next requires it—change looks not like instability but almost like the condition of stability. The past can still be seen as the incubator of the present. This implies, of course, that such change must not be catastrophic. And indeed, in the second place, America has had no reason to experience radical discontinuity: this is the century of its emergence as the most powerful nation on the world stage, a rise for which its whole history has prepared it. In America we are still in the age of romantic history, in the midst of a love affair with the nation. Finally, and most important, we must go back to Tocqueville, or Louis Hartz, and the liberal consensus or common faith. The speed of social change may well be the same as it is in Europe (although one could argue that postwar Europe has been hastily catching up with America's brand of industrial society); but the irrelevance of past beliefs does not appear at all obvious to Americans. Whatever its transformations, their polity still seems in harmony with an unfolding of the "Lockean faith." Tocqueville would probably have some trouble recognizing his preindustrial small-town America; but the basic principles are still there, and the new institutions that have developed since his day are based on them.

The American creed has survived because the United States has been (or appears to the world and to its own people to be) a success story. Both this creed and other powerful bonds—ethnic loyalties, religious communities, class solidarities, or neighborhood associations—have mitigated the effects of social change and crises. In Europe, such ties have, on the contrary, been weakened or destroyed by a combination of factors: the speed and magnitude of change, a

disastrous history, the corrosion of religion (and of such a quasi-religious force as the early working-class movement) by secular ideological involvements and struggles, and the poverty of associational life in centralized nations. Therefore, contrary to what might have been expected, the democratic society par excellence, the United States, is closer to its past than the historical societies of Europe—a fact that confirms the impossibility of deriving any firm conclusion about politics or culture from a social ideal type such as democracy. The bones tell us nothing about the flesh or about the spirit.

A collective image of the past and the possibility of being inspired by this image thus depend on the preservation of collective ties, in the form of institutions or common values, among the citizens. Religion, the nation, and ideologies (which played so large an integrating role) partook of both forms. In Western Europe there used to be one group that defined its mission either as the defense of established institutions and values or as the mobilization of the people to create new ones: it was the intelligentsia, a kind of secular priesthood that owed its audience to the decline of organized religion and old regimes and to its frequent association with liberalism and nationalism (even though its prestige and authority were firmly rooted in persistent aristocratic values—which may help explain why it never played a comparable role in this country). Today, however, its attitude contributes to the erosion or erasure of the past. The relation of the intelligentsia to the past is, needless to say, far from simple. Let me take only the case of France. There we find every possible attitude, on the part of the intelligentsia, and yet somehow every one of them contributes to the break with the past. Malraux, in his quest for death-defying acts, became a celebrator of mankind's past artistic achievements and of France's national record. But his very style—his dazzling ellipses and his instinct for the difficult or the inaccessible, his heroic yet impractical hope of bringing the highest to the common man, his sumptuous threnodies, his fascination with exceptional men, and his part-whimsical, part-desperate doubts about humanity's future—somehow widened the distance between the past and us. Sartre, with his frenzied view of consciousness defining itself (and all of us) by throwing itself into and acting toward the future and his somewhat Manichaeian view of the historical process as a discontinuous series of surges of spontaneity that fall back into the *pratico-inerte* as soon as organization and institutions take over, looks at the past both as a

struggle of alienated beings driven by scarcity and as a record of failure. By contrast with Malraux, Sartre was never concerned with its meaning for us (since we shall find meaning only through what we do next). Yet, in his long confrontation with Marxism, he at least proclaimed that whatever meaning history has lies in the acting out of human consciousness. Other intellectuals have rejected history altogether, or tried—to use the jargon of the time—to “evacuate the conscious subject”: Lévi-Strauss asserts the importance of structures that owe nothing to man-made history and expresses his nostalgia for those societies that live outside history, “surrounded by (its) substance and . . . impervious to it”;⁸ Althusser reduces Marxism to a set of structural laws; Foucault discovers hidden structures of knowledge that dictate their rules to men; Deleuze and Guattari see man as a mere collection—not of feelings, desires, or ideas that can properly be called his own but of *machines désirantes* that drive, or rather push and pull him. It is not surprising that the confrontation with events has made it difficult for several of these writers to be consistent: events are clearly man-made, not just structural outputs; and in such confrontations, when writers had to decide—concretely—who was at fault, who caused the harm they deplored (and not simply what structure or what clash of machines resulted in what action, institution, or *discours*), they fell back not on history but on ideology. Foucault has shifted from the archaeology of knowledge to capitalist alienation, and the authors of *L'Anti-Oedipe* have denounced capitalism (and indeed, the whole modern system of production) as the root of poor Oedipus's schizophrenia.

Is there, then, nobody who wants to preserve the connection to the past? Surely many do, but for reasons that turn out to have rather little in common with the desire to nurture a sense of historical continuity or to use this sense as an enrichment of the present or an inspiration for the future. (De Gaulle was the last postwar statesman, along with the aging Churchill, to look at history in this way; and it is not merely a matter of age, since Adenauer, for many reasons, did not do so.) Ancient monuments are, of course, being piously restored; but is it because of what they mean today or because they are part of the “artistic patrimony” of the nation and, therefore, of its overall resources? Old buildings are being renovated and visited by eager groups, but is it a way of keeping the past in one's midst, or is it an alternative to a relief from the unmistakable horrors of much of

modern European architecture? Old regional feasts and fairs are turned into festivals, but is this a means for reaching into the past or into the pocketbooks of tourists? National holidays are being celebrated, but is this done for the reasons a Robespierre once gave when he advocated such ceremonies or in order to provide governments with a moment of contrived harmony, and citizens with a day off?

The real reachers for the past fall into two groups. Paradoxically, the Marxist Left and its intellectuals—the heralds of change—have become the curators of the revolutionary museum. Radicalism has become a tradition. Since the present has a mixed record, the past can be used to show the depth—in time and scope—of the present evils. (For example, *Que la fête commence*, a quite wonderful film, uses the Regency of 1715 as a way of denouncing the social and political ills of today.) The past can also be used to assure the faithful that the day of reckoning will come, as well as to put them on guard against repeating the errors that have doomed revolutions in the past. But when turning to the past as a way of lecturing us about the present and expressing hope in the future becomes the last resort of revolutionaries, what appears at first as reconnection turns out to be one more escape. (I am thinking of the abundance of French literature about the Commune and of recent plays about the Revolution.) For such a turn is no longer a search and a scrutiny of the past. It is a consolation for the present—a series of parables that keeps us warm for a while in the middle of a very cold here-and-now. One leaves such books, plays, or movies feeling, contrary to the authors' wishes, that insofar as things were always so bad, there is little hope indeed; the past mainly serves as an explanation of and a diversion from present failure. Often today the best historians are either Marxists who are, personally, sufficiently unrevolutionary—that is, conservative—to use Marxist insights as a tool of historical research rather than using historical examples as an ersatz goad to Marxist revolution; or else they are ex-Communists who have given up the promised land of utopia for the historian's territory. So we again find scientific history as a repudiation, overt or covert, of ideology, and as a way of looking at the past that disconnects it from the present.

The other group that goes after the past is made up of ethnic and regional minorities: as the majority grows distant from its past, these groups rediscover (or invent) theirs. The present is the age of *their* romantic history. This, too, is an old story—that of nationalism

among peoples long deprived of sovereignty, for whom a digging up of alleged or real antiquity is a rebellion against the oppression of the recent past and the present. But just as there is something pathetic about the *passéisme* of Marxist revolutionaries, there is something ungainly about that of Corsican, Occitan, or even Scottish rebels. For here, the past is used not, as it was among the Germans, Italians, or Slavs of the last century, as a cultural basis for a modern creation—a nation—but as a protest against (largely) economic inequalities. Usually there is insufficient popular support (or often even desire) for establishing a separate nation in a Europe where the present nation-states suffer from multiple impotence (which new ones would only reproduce) and yet still have the capacity to defend themselves against secession.

In the educational system the teaching of history regresses. It used to be a major component of mass primary education and of the secondary education that a minority of privileged *and* gifted not-so-privileged youngsters received. Today, this preeminence is challenged by more practical or more scientific disciplines. In a democracy, the authority of the teacher *qua* teacher is rather low. It rests on his expertise, not on his calling; and the prestige of his expertise depends on the usefulness of the knowledge he imparts. In France, the traditional supremacy of letters and history has ended: glamour glistens on mathematics. High school history is being diluted into social studies—the study of the contemporary. The hold of history in the school thus depends, above all, on the importance of the school as a seminary for teaching a civic faith that is rooted in history. In the United States, schools are often still such seminaries; on the other side of the Atlantic, they no longer are.

Those who find silver linings in every cloud might want to stress one advantage of this demise: will not young Europeans stop learning, internalizing, and reliving the ideological and national quarrels of the past? Maybe; and yet such potential gains in tolerance and *détente* (the French word for which has become *décrispation*) are more than offset by important drawbacks, for the unexamined past lives on, and disconnection from it merely makes it more difficult to understand and cope with its formidable residues. It lives on, first of all, in the form of would-be but unfit masterkeys. Since the human mind craves comprehensive explanations for complex events and general causes for disparate effects—especially in countries such as

those of Western Europe, where education used to be a missionary branch of the Enlightenment rather than a service for practical adaptation—what is more natural than trying to account for the bewildering array of contemporary changes in the sweeping terms of a seemingly “scientific” philosophy of history? Hence the persistence of Marxism, despite repeated, careful demonstrations of its inadequacy (à la Raymond Aron)⁹ or periodic denunciations of its temporal incarnations (à la *nouveaux philosophes*, twenty-five years after Camus). A system of thought rooted in history has become an obstacle to understanding much of the present precisely because the growing evidence of its divorce from historical evolution is obscured by the decline of historical consciousness.

The past lives on, also, as a series of problems, tensions, atavisms—old institutions, modes of authority, or to quote Michel Crozier,¹⁰ models of rationality that no longer fit the advanced industrial societies of Western Europe, and constitute so many obstacles to individual desires, group aspirations, or collective efficiency. If the problems of class conflict are muddled rather than clarified by a clinging to old dogmatic formulas, the problems of persistent but counterproductive authoritarianism are made worse by the frequent failure to examine its historical roots, to understand why it has proven so resilient despite vast changes in social organization and in values, and despite the transformation or the weakening of many institutions (such as the family, the Church, and the school system) that used to be its props. The lack of historical reflection thus breeds the illusion of quick remedies or encourages the growth of anti-authoritarian utopias (like *autogestion*) that are too impractical, too naïve in their hope of doing away with power altogether, to do much harm to their foe; or, on the contrary, they foster the belief that new challenges to social order can best be met by “reenforcing authority” (as in West Germany’s reaction against terrorism). What a writer recently called postwar West Germany’s confusion of democracy with anticommunism,¹¹ like Italy’s confusion of democracy with a mix of parliamentarism and *clientelismo*, or France’s confusion of democracy with bureaucracy legitimized by universal suffrage, is the joint result of an inadequate confrontation with the recent past and a growing estrangement from the more distant one.

It has been said that bad conscience—fed by the failures or crimes of the past—may at least have the virtue of instigating commitment.

But when it is pure of historical understanding, it leads to blind nihilism. And when that same purity is not accompanied by any bad conscience, the failure of memory through disconnection from the past leads to a failure of imagination and will in connection with the future: the destruction—partly willed, but largely unwitting—of the past has not been the prelude to the construction of a new destiny.

IV

The future too, of course, is viewed in national terms because of the same idiosyncrasies that have kept the Western European nations from building a common state; they are partly deep residues of the past, partly distinctive features of their present political and social system. Old blinders or worries, present crises, and opportunities loom large in such visions. The British, after years of vivisectioning their malaise (the “British disease”), see a brighter future thanks to the combination of luck—the North Sea oil—and traditional virtues—rediscovered self-restraint and incomes discipline. The Germans, despite a party system that strikes foreign observers as more consensual than any outside the United States, worry about law and order and argue about the best way to protect a democratic system whose fresh roots are growing in a society where liberalism remains conditional—dependent on efficiency. Italians are entirely absorbed by the drama of the permanent crisis and see as the only alternatives either a total breakdown—followed by some still unpredictable rule of violence and terror—or a coalition of the two huge secular churches—the Christian Democrats and the Communists. This coalition would feed the skepticism or anxieties of those who belong to neither party, those who trust one but not the other, and those who fear that the union of the two mastodons would give a colossal, final proof of impotence. The French oscillate between a new pragmatism that may turn out to be another word for complacency and immobility and an addiction to political divisions whose only merit is to keep alive the illusion of real choice. What is remarkable is how little each national vision is affected by the others. It is even more remarkable that none of them amounts to a national design.

They have one thing in common: a combination of two sets of experience and expectations, which does not beget a vision of the future. For many years, Western Europeans have lived on the moving

escalator of economic growth. The social dislocations and political changes it has brought about have, as I have already stated, riveted their minds on the present. At the same time, especially as governments for so long have suggested that (or acted as if) the solution to all tensions would be provided by further growth, the citizens were led to believe that the future could be summed up as a continuing and growing manna—the condition of the fulfillment of individual ambitions and desires, the prerequisite of greater social justice, and the way to equality of opportunity and results. In this sense, the imagined future was no more than a projection of what was most welcome in the present and the hope that what was currently unwelcome would be eliminated or tamed. The British, whose growth was smaller, told pollsters that they felt happy, happier than the continentals. But their own leaders worried about the effects of the lower rate, and the continentals showed a remarkable consensus in rejecting any thought that their tensions and frustrations might be relieved by a slowdown. If we mean by the word *political* a consideration of one's relation to others, to groups, to the community, and to the state in terms of values, beliefs, and power, the prevailing vision was singularly apolitical: its blandishments were bland; its appeal lay in its being so easy.

It was precisely because this vision of quantitative happiness, this somewhat mindless faith in a self-propelled expansion that apparently required no more from each citizen than his labor and a minimum of social integration, this failure to imagine another model of society, another kind of individual fate, another destiny for the nation, seemed so tepid or boring to many of the young that the "events" of May 1968 occurred. But a rebellion is not a construction: no alternative vision came out of it. May 1968 showed how the death of *le passé vécu* and the failure to bring a new design to life are linked. The young rebels may have thought they were reliving a revolutionary past, but they were only going through the motion: they acted; they did not reenact. A liquidation of what had become secondhand or bookish memories led nowhere—except to a deluge of books. Most of the young, whether they took part in this "happening" or not, seemed, in fact, to accept the common vision and to think of their own future in terms of individual security amidst general

prosperity.¹² There seemed to be nothing between unlimited alienation and limited horizons, a rejection *in toto* of the prevailing values or a somewhat passive acceptance of them.

Then came the experience of the recession. It shattered the expectations of an ever-rising escalator. It revived old critiques of capitalism, old discussions about its final crisis. But no new alternative vision has emerged; it is as if people have remained glued to the motionless escalator and waited for it to get well. The Europeans' own "revolution of rising expectations" made its sudden stop that much more jarring. But despite some talk about new models of growth or qualitative rather than quantitative growth, governments and citizens were joined in a desire to put the escalator back in motion; the only disagreements between or within nations have been over rates of recovery, fears of inflation and unemployment, and obligations of mutual solidarity. In other words, little has been learned from the troubles that have blurred the easy vision. No more political action or proposal has appeared. This older and somewhat uninspiring vision—what French rebels had called *métro, boulot, dodo*—has simply been proven unreliable. The recession and its inequities confirmed the rebels in their rejection of the model (and probably helped turn some of them from spontaneous psychodrama to organized terror), while the passive acceptance of this model by the others lost some of its former complacency. And the millions, neither rebels nor conformists, who subscribe to the critique of capitalism offered by the Marxist Left, nevertheless live a double life or practice double-entry bookkeeping. They have seen their reasons for distrusting the model vindicated, yet they see no future other than one of economic growth. (They only wish the authorities in charge to be less distant, unreliable, greedy, or unfair than the profit makers who have managed it so far.)

This brings us to a query about the institutions and forces that used to be, so to speak, the incubators of designs, the shapers of the collective will, or the sources of collective utopias. Among the most potent of these were the ideologies political forces offered to the citizens. What visions of the future do they now propose? Nothing much, really. One can divide these forces into several categories which do not always correspond to distinctions between parties. First, there are the managers: the French *majorité*, the Italian Christian Democrats, the bulk of the three West German and the

British parties, and the Spanish establishment that developed under Franco's shadow. They are the high priests of the prevailing model of growth, and all subscribe, with national or party nuances, both to Pompidou's conviction that the state's role is to straighten or smooth out (nothing more) the natural effects of continuing industrialization, and to Giscard's dictum that governing is just the art of "*gérer l'imprévisible*." There may be a vision here, but the least one can say is that it lacks inspiration. To quote the earlier French president—de Gaulle—"marrying one's century" may well be necessary, but does it prepare one for the next? De Gaulle, it is true, was not simply a manager; he had a vision, both of the past and of the future, and he still believed in national history and national will in the grand double drama of internal togetherness and external struggle. But his was, above all, a vision of rallying for and acting on the world stage. He talked of French and European might, not of French or European social and political organization (beyond the need for a strong state). When, at the end, he realized that this was the area in which a vision was most needed (given France's and Europe's limited range on the world scene) and when he came to see that without such a vision no dream of the world stage, however modest, could ever be realized, he fell—both because many of his own supporters showed no desire for imagination and because his own was ill at ease in this realm.

Next to the managers, there are the challengers: the Communists, the Labor and SPD Left, and the French Socialists. They too have had trouble with the future. Sometimes, as in England, their vision is so insular and goes so much against the common scriptures of growth as to appear almost perverse—thoroughly unappealing to the unconverted and singularly austere even to the faithful. Sometimes, their programs are not prophecies or calls to arms but mere critiques of present injustices and acute expressions of present discontents. Sometimes, as in the case of the French Socialists, they seem caught between residual (or is it revived?) utopianism—as in the drive for *autogestion*—against "professional politics" and against the centralized state that pretends to express the general will. The drive comes, if not like de Gaulle's view of France, *du fond des âges*, at least from the oldest Socialist and syndicalist fund¹³—as well as from rather routine sources of social democracy. Sometimes, as in the case of the Communists, the challengers are split between those who seek, at least temporarily, to collude diffidently with the managers—because

of the scars left by past Fascist experiences and, therefore, the need to give priority to the establishment or survival of democracy (however “formal”)—and those who, like the French, cling to a Leninist model of revolutionary break with the established order while trying to de-Leninize the model just enough to capture voters whose ideal for the future is definitely not Leninist. In other words, they behave like a church that is afraid both of losing its distinctiveness by throwing out too much of a now-unappealing dogma and of losing its appeal by not throwing out enough (not an inaccurate description of the present Roman Catholic church). The compromise is neither stable or popular within nor convincing outside.

Thus, the great ideological “spiritual families” of the past have either disappeared or propose no relevant future. What do Christian Democrats offer except a plea for law and order, a spectacle of decay, or a touching faith in European integration as the *deus ex machina*? Has socialism succeeded in preserving its identity? Or has it not rather been endlessly torn between the managerial temptation, a stern egalitarianism, and a welfarism that accepts, in order to reform it, capitalist society; and when the costs of welfarism become unbearable as growth slows down (and welfarism tends indeed to slow growth by drying out investment), what more does socialism offer than a nostalgia for a new *projet de société* it cannot quite define? Has liberalism succeeded in moving beyond the reconciliation of political liberty with democracy, or the compromise between the market and some government control, which date from much earlier times? What can old conservatism offer when whatever it wanted to conserve is gone? What is the communist ideal once you erase the Soviet Union from it—and even if you leave it in? The notion of the death of ideology has been accepted too easily and buried too soon. Its celebrators grandly overrated, in their Saint-Simonian faith in science and production, the degree to which the advent of postindustrial society would inject pragmatism, erase class differences, tame class conflicts, modernize party systems, and eliminate Luddite extremists. Ideologies are still there, though, especially on the Left—as is normal, since the Left is the refuge and hope of those who dislike the established order. Traces of ideological thinking can be found all over the picture; but insofar as ideologies offered plausible visions of the future, the much-rejected notion was not so wrong. Either there are no such visions or else they are not plausible, like those spun out

by hundreds of *groupuscules*. They describe the ideal future as what will miraculously arise when the present society has been entirely destroyed—a grand release of spontaneity, a fusion in fraternity, but no discernible social order. And the visions are based less on faith than on hate, as in the beautiful scene of destruction at the end of Antonioni's *Zabriskie Point*. Marxism is still present—often omnipresent—and diffuse. But it serves as a tool for analyzing the flaws of the status quo and as a goad for proposing the demise of the present, not as a blueprint for the future. Societies that depend on growth and whose citizens expect it even when they criticize its present motors, societies moreover that have been bitten or have barely escaped being bitten by the “carnivorous idols” Bernanos talked about in the 1930s, ask formidable questions of each ideological vision of the future. The questions were often either not raised before or were deemed secondary—Will it work? At what costs? Societies that have suffered from the disease of unrestrained ideologies on a rampage and have put their hopes in the benefits of economic growth now impose a reality test on political visions, even if their own vision of the future is singularly unpolitical and unreal.

Those who announced the end of ideology believed that the advent of a pragmatic age would propel Western Europe toward a plannable future—postindustrial society. But such pragmatism presupposes either that political problems have been reduced to technical ones (to be solved by experts) or that the old ideologies are to be replaced by a new one—the ideology of advanced liberal capitalism—which would dampen and thus help resolve disputes. If both postulates are wrong and the old ideologies are dead or dying, one is left immersed in a dreary present, a jungle of group conflicts, with no standard for their solution. And the very intensity of the struggle for power and product, the very absence of any grand cause, the very myopia of each class, profession, and association concentrating on its claims makes it almost impossible for any vision of the future to emerge.

The other forces from which such visions used to emanate are in no better shape. I have already mentioned the Catholic church. Its image of the future used to be shaped by its conception of the past, by the accretion of values and dogmas transmitted from generation to generation. Inevitably, now that this heritage is being liquidated—partly because it is incompatible with the dynamics and mores of the modern world and partly because it has been compromised by past

collusions between the Church and antidemocratic political ideologies and elites—the Church is left without a vision of the future and exposed to another kind of collusion—with the political and social activists of reform or even revolution. Yesterday's involvement with secularism condemned the Church to unpopularity; but the secularists on whom it used to lean had borrowed their own design and dogmas from the Church. Today, it is the Church that does the borrowing—from people caught in or drifting amidst the troubles of the present.

The army also used to offer a vision of the future. But it was one of a struggle against other European nations for revenge or supremacy, or against the barbarians for law and order and civilization. Of course, the willingness to resort to force, the usefulness of force, indeed the greatness of force, were essential to this vision: as de Gaulle wrote, "the sword is the axis of the world, and greatness cannot be divided."¹⁴ Force today is doubly devalued: pragmatically because the risks are too great and the rewards too slim, and intellectually because its prestige in Europe has not survived the orgies of violence of two world wars. Armies reduced to deterrent and latent or oblique functions or to "punctual" rescue operations have trouble finding volunteers or keeping draftees from displaying their boredom. At any rate, they too are in a limbo, between a past they can only celebrate with ambivalence and a future they cannot like.

Again, the intelligentsia offers no more vision of the future than of the past. It may once have played a role as the purveyor of utopias, but there are not many utopias to be found today. Marxists abound—as critics of the present. But they are now bereft of a future. It was relatively easy to propose one—as there was no socialist society anywhere—before 1914. Now there are too many, and the most orthodox is the biggest disappointment of all. When reality begins to shackle the imagination and to betray hope, resentment alone remains—and sometimes indeed, as in France in the past months, the resentment turns away from the present toward a wholesale repudiation of Marxism altogether. To be sure, Italian and French syndicalists and their sympathizers have, as I said before, articulated the utopia of *autogestion*; but in their drive to appear responsible—that is, not utopian—the revolutionary force of the idea, which was still considerable after May 1968 and the "hot Fall"

of Italy, has been eroded. Pragmatic proposals have replaced the Sorelian myth. Intellectuals are still the experimenters, but their experiments have been, so to speak, privatized: they deal with the realms of aesthetics, linguistics, theater, and the movies, with psychoanalysis, and with poetry. Sometimes their experiments carry them into local social-welfare operations, like the French *Lacaniens* and antipsychiatrists after 1968; but this occurred precisely because the wider political scene had proven so disappointing.¹⁵ As Crozier points out, the traditional role of the intellectual—to serve as a self-appointed conscience and guide of the nation, and thus to propose ideals and to speak out about its present and its future—has to a considerable extent disappeared. Sartre's last active years as a writer have been spent on his negative identity, called Flaubert.

For a while, in the 1960s, it seemed that the old intellectual would be replaced by the new problem-solving social scientist, who would lend his expertise to the managers and lead them to careful reforms. But on the one hand, the multiplication of “perverse” (or counterintuitive) effects, the latent dissatisfaction of many of the experts with a role that seemed to them like a fall from the pedestal of the past and like mere service of the prince, the impatience of the managers with experts more concerned with their own research priorities than with those of the state—all doomed or at least dwarfed that experiment. On the other hand, social science, especially when it divorces itself from public philosophy, rarely goes beyond what Max Weber called the disenchantment of reality—revealing, unveiling, and debunking. Now, any vision of the future must go beyond this point, or rather stay on this side of total lucidity, if it is to be a call or guide to action, for one cannot act without somehow underestimating difficulties or overestimating those whom one wants to rally. Intellectuals qua prophets had idealized the People; the social scientists' job is to describe the real, not the imaginary, people. Action simplifies; social science complicates.

Insofar as social engineering continues, with carefully reduced expectations, it reflects what I said about the citizenry as a whole: its practitioners have demonstrated little imagination about the future and have proven that even its limited promises may not be kept after all. Members of the intelligentsia who have turned away from that troubled partnership in social engineering have gone in one of two

directions and sometimes in both. One is specialized scientific research or arcane experimentation. This choice preserves that distance between the intellectual and the average man, that equation between intellectual work and prowess that is a legacy from the aristocratic age—although it is now divorced from the nineteenth-century artist's desire to lead the masses into a promised land. Of course, among those who choose this direction, very little is being said about the problems of everyday life, ethics, institutions, work, and leisure. The second direction is a residue of this grand claim—a kind of debased nostalgia for it: it is the desire to be “popular,” fashionable, a media *habitué* or a media event, a troubadour of spontaneity or a mod synthesizer of concepts that are in or on the air. (Witness the sudden discovery in France, in 1977, that power is everywhere. What would Molière have done with that?) But in this case, the once-prophet becomes a mere critic who peremptorily denounces what the power-mongers have done but who refuses to say what they should have done since all politics is contemptible. A narcissistic, self-appointed spokesman for the victims of the universal Gulag, he abdicates all responsibility for imagining a better world, merely calls for resistance whenever the powers-that-be step on the little man's toes, or sympathizes with the longings of adolescence. This has happened to the *nouveaux philosophes* (they were not reluctant), and it also characterizes much of the writing of Alain Touraine. Even a work as careful in its attempt to avoid both esoterism and grand rhetoric as the Crozier-Friedberg call for a new kind of social theory strikes one as singularly ahistorical and modest about the future:¹⁶ change must come through experimentation *à la base*, through the gradual learning of new collective capabilities; there is no way to describe it in advance, nor should too much of it be attempted at any given moment, since people cannot stand a heavy dose of upheaval. It is as if much of the European intelligentsia, after witnessing the shambles and crimes perpetrated by the “isms” it used to embrace, had turned away in horror, not merely from such isms but also from the kind of *prospective* they provided and perverted. The welcome rediscovery of those virtues dear to Camus—modesty and limits—has led to a retreat from political thought altogether. Since the air was foul, those who helped make it so have decided to stop breathing.

The intellectuals, through their writings and through the role they played in and around political parties, used to peddle visions of the

future. While their wares may have reached only a small portion of the public, their influence was much broader; their ideas became known not only through the parties, but also because of another transmission belt—the system of education. Nowhere was schooling merely a set of training techniques, a transmission of accumulated usable knowledge, or a machine for “social reproduction.” Not only in the Gymnasium, lycée, or public school attended by the few, but in primary education for the many, the school system transmitted values, formed citizens (some as responsible participants, some as obedient subjects), and provided them, more or less overtly, with images of the future. The educational system of the Third Republic, whose textbooks were written by distinguished scholars and intellectual administrators, propagated a vision of the future that combined the preservation of traditional French bourgeois values and the progressive unfolding of the Enlightenment—science, rationality, material gains, and increasing possibilities of self-determination for individuals long oppressed by routines or dogmas as well as for nations. It was a remarkable blend of the traditional and the revolutionary, well-fitted to a society that resisted rapid changes in behavior and habits yet was permanently in love with the idea of change, the ideal of emancipation, and a self-image as a beacon of light. It is not a coincidence that the most influential intellectual godfather of schoolteachers before the First World War was Jaurès, a visionary who was also the finest product of his nation’s culture and the very symbol of nineteenth-century optimism.

As in the intellectual world, we are now witnessing an eclipse of the future in the school system. It has been replaced with “present shock”: a proliferation of options and subjects, an often frantic or overstuffed attempt at putting into the hands of the young as many tools as possible to help them understand and navigate in the present (hence a high rate of obsolescence and a breathless, permanent revision of curricula). To be sure, there is much of this kind of scurrying in America as well; but there, the beliefs of the *angewandte Aufklärung*¹⁷ surround and give meaning to the disconnected bits and pieces. This is not the case in Western Europe. The public cult of growth is not a substitute, for it is a cult of means, not ends; and if there is one group that is often sullen, bitter, and hostile toward the cult, it is the teachers. Not only is their prestige falling, as I have pointed out before. But, trained to transmit established knowledge to

pupils whose function it is to receive it, they are confronted instead with the need for their own permanent reeducation, with the duty to transmit methods and data that in a short time may prove to be wrong and with young men and women who are increasingly impatient with the old-style pedagogy. Both in reference to what is to be taught and how best to teach it, the very speed of change, already found partly responsible for the receding of the past, also contributes to the blackout of the future. The school is caught between students concerned above all with their own opportunities in nations marked by disruptive changes—as well as by vast surges for collective social ascent—and teachers who do not always comprehend the changes and who often feel that in growth-obsessed societies they have lost much of the high ground they held in the days when efficiency, consumption, and the production of goods were not the highest values. The only function of the school seems to be running after (or behind) adjustment: its fate parallels that of European societies, which used to see themselves on top of their own fate in a world shaped by them. Yesterday, the school was a force for social integration that taught values drawn from the past and expectations about the future. Today, if it is such a force at all, it is as a purely functional agent of preparation for the present.

If “no model of civilization emerges from the present-day drifting culture, no call for reform and pioneering,”¹⁸ if radical criticism so often turns out to be no more than criticism without a vision for replacement of what is to be destroyed, there is still another reason: the displacement of the intelligentsia by the media, or perhaps the rush of the intellectuals themselves to become (pardon the expression) “communicators” rather than creators. This is often seen as a means of remaining “relevant” in nations where the public no longer turns to its great writers for guidance—unless they write for mass consumption or appear on the screen. Indeed, the media have become a screen between the intellectuals and the public. The former feel that their only alternatives are isolation (which they fear) and capitulation (which they often seem to crave). I call it capitulation—not merely joining what one cannot fight—because the media impose their own constraints. Whether—depending on the country and the medium—they revel in muckraking or in celebration, they too tend to emphasize the present, either to condone or to condemn it. The past is a source of entertainment, the future a dangerous bone of contention.

A few moviemakers may invent futures, but rarely and usually only to warn us about present trends (for example, Truffaut's *Fahrenheit 451*, which is based on a story by American author Ray Bradbury). Television in Europe shuns the controversial for political reasons (as in France), scrutinizes the present to heighten citizen awareness (as in England and West Germany), or endlessly serves up old movies and adaptations of novels. The press, with few exceptions, sees its role as purveyor of information and analyses of the present; the recently created "ideas" page of *Le Monde* almost seems designed to highlight the plight of the modern intellectual—he sounds esoteric when he talks of his own research, and puerile when he tries to walk in the steps of the older thinkers and muse about anything outside his own field.

If the media are the daily opium, the provider of food in the citizen's daily life is the bureaucracy. Just as the media have pushed aside or domesticated the intellectuals, who used to invent futures, the bureaucrats have taken over the state, which used to choose one and build it. Ruling has become managing, and the bureaucracy manages us all, or almost all of us. "Marginalized" people—immigrant workers, or workers and employees who live in the shadow economy on which the visible one often relies for survival (as Suzanne Berger has shown),¹⁹ shopkeepers, artisans, and peasants on their way out, or students parked in university ghettos with no job possibilities when they come out, may fall outside the bureaucracy's net. They are either living in a hopeless present or "recuperated" by nihilists. The citizens who perform in the carnival of growth, those who are under the net—with their bargaining power, institutions, and associations that are the essence of modern corporatism—are, for all the weapons at their disposal, *administrés*. Pressuring the bureaucracy on whose benefits, directives, incentives, and guidelines they depend is their constant concern as producers or consumers. (This is one reason why the use of the word *corporatism* is misleading: in orthodox corporatist theory, the groups are autonomous and have taken power away from the state; today, they are tied to it in symbiotic alliance or contest.) The bureaucracy also contributes to the general immersion in the present. True, there is some official concern with planning the future, but it is less a matter of vision than a question of deterrence; without foresight, without an evaluation of trends, an extrapolation of curves, there will be disasters, and the

bureaucracy's role is to insure smoothness. But, almost by definition, it cannot begin with a utopia and provide the means to bring it about. It must start with the present, with today's notions of what is desirable (full employment, no inflation, better housing, the stability of families, adequate health care and schooling, growing productivity, sufficient supplies of energy, better working conditions); it then tries to insure that tomorrow will meet the standards and demands of today. I do not mean to suggest, as Henry Kissinger did, that bureaucracy is the born enemy of creativity and imagination; I would only point out that this is not its domain or duty. The vision must come from somewhere else; when there is none, when no people or leaders give them directives about the kind of future that ought to be created, then the bureaucracy's essence—the middle range, coping with what exists, trouble avoidance, and predictability—occupies the whole scene. Its own weight, its importance in the daily affairs of Western European societies, tends to be rather overwhelming anyhow (much more so than in the United States, even in a country such as Italy, where the state is weak and the bureaucracy is far from efficient). The reasons are many: parliaments cannot cope, or else they try to do little more than protect special interests; so many ministers are managerial types or are easily tamed by the bureaucrats; the margins of choice are so small; and, above all, the economic and social functions of the state are so large. This situation not only seriously limits the leaders' capacity to realize whatever vision they may have; it also inhibits their ability to shape any vision at all. Everywhere in the capitalist world, the state that wants to avoid recession and inflation finds that its margin of maneuver is severely constrained by the dynamics, domestic and international, of the capitalist economy; the more extensive the functions and bureaucracy of the state, the more visible these constraints and the more inhibited the state's capacity to imagine and prepare a different future. It was fascinating to watch, in the French Socialist party, the struggle between the utopians and the "realists" (and, sometimes, between utopian and "responsible" fragments of the same personality, such as Michel Rocard). Societies doomed to constant efficiency and success are deadly not only for ideologies but for all far-reaching visions of the future.

Thus, none of the forces or institutions that used to breed visions of the future, and that also served as instruments of social integration

and control, perform as innovators anymore. Another factor obliterates visions of the future. There are no outside models to inspire one and to allow one to say, "See, my future is no utopia, since it already works somewhere else." Neither superpower is an inspiration. There are many reasons why America is not—even though Europe's model of growth and the techniques for promoting growth are borrowed from the United States. To Europeans, America is a supermarket, not a religion; one turns to it for recipes and goods, not for its spirit or for its value as a model of society. There is also the simple fact of America's power and presence: can the heir to a long and glorious past, the dreamer of a united Europe (whatever the failure of will and the blurred image of the past) legitimately accept the master's way of life as an ideal? Indeed, the more they lift or imitate, the more Western Europe's societies begin resembling America, at least superficially, and the more they are bound to proclaim that the borrowing is a means to something original. The difference in world power strengthens and inflames an old European tendency to cultural snobbery—how can one take as an ideal a nation whose cultural achievements do not measure up to one's own? This pose remains important, even in places such as England and Germany, where the next reason is not so strong. Europe's traditional ideologies, however irrelevant or faded in their power to describe a future, remain, with the single exception of liberalism, distant enough from American experience to serve as screens between it and the Europeans. It is not surprising to find in France, side by side, a Marxist critique of American capitalism and imperialism and a right-wing onslaught on American egalitarianism, commercialism, homogenization of cultures, pernicious universalism, and lack of aesthetic sense. "A corpse in good health," a source of perversion, degradation, and infection, a country which "drops everywhere the eggs of its ugliness"—these themes are spun by some Gaullists and also some neo-Fascists.²⁰ (However, the critique of capitalism and imperialism sometimes comes from the Right, the aesthetic critique from the Left, as in Werner Herzog's unforgettable movie *Stroszek*, whose antihero finally kills himself in the wasteland of America, the country of the cold and of artificial hens gone mad in an amusement gallery.) Moreover, as Aron has pointed out, America is a country whose idea of the future is nothing but the fulfillment of its ideals at birth:²¹ it is not a prophecy, but a vindication (so that any crisis of values or

institutions breeds a kind of fundamentalist revival). The Western Europeans find no such decalogue at their origins: their revolutions are either unfinished or have failed. For all these reasons, there have been more piecemeal imitations than overall celebrations of the American model. Finally, America's own ideal (but do Americans understand it?) is highly nationalistic: it is the realization of America's mission, it is the triumph at home and abroad of a certain conception of man's relation to God and to government, which was born in rebellion against and developed in separation from Europe. And so we have come full circle.

If America never became the ideal even when it was the example, the Soviet Union has ceased being either. "Eurocommunism" is not a very helpful concept. But what the three Communist parties of France, Italy, and Spain have in common is a deliberate distance from the Soviet Union—whether in the form of an open attack on the essence of the Soviet system, as in Carrillo's case; as jerky repudiations of key elements of the Soviet state and ideology, as in Marchais's; or in polite and friendly estrangement, as in Berlinguer's. The French example shows that it is more difficult to jettison the Nessus's tunic of a Leninist organization and frame of mind than to get rid of the concept of proletarian dictatorship and the single-party state. Yet the lesson is clear: no significant Western European Communist party, except Portugal's, proposes the Soviet Union as a model of socialism; each one explains that Western European circumstances make it irrelevant. Moreover, the new generation of Communist voters knows more about the crimes of Stalin, thanks to the media, than older party members were ever allowed to guess. As for the savage kinds of communism or extremist Marxism, they are orphans. Whether they were of Trotskyite origin or not, they had always looked askance at the Soviet Moloch. They used to believe that the sun would rise in the Far East, in Mao's China; but the end of the Cultural Revolution and the fall of the Gang of Four have made them aware of a bitter fact: the Chinese model may not be so different from the Soviet one after all, whatever the national enmities and differences in levels of development and policies between the two. (One such orphan, the *Tel Quel* group of French intellectuals, having moved beyond Red China, has now discovered the United States as a country where, given capitalism's constraints, little may be accomplished but

a lot is permitted: artistic experiments, group rebellions, experimentations—who would have thought that the search for spontaneity would cross the Atlantic, or rather the Pacific?²² Yugoslav workers' control is a dubious case; Guevara is dead; Castro is a Soviet client; and Régis Debray is a prizewinning novelist.

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We have once again come full circle. The fading of the national past could have meant the giving up of a narrow identity in preparation for and in favor of the adoption of a new broader European one. But this would have required an image of, a will for, a common future. *Tout se tient*: with no clear visions of the future, how can Frenchmen, Englishmen, etc. desire a *projet* for Europe? And if they are encased in their national present, how can they do anything but lose contact with a past that is both increasingly less vivid, less present, less relevant, and something of a reproach? How can they be more than conformists complying with a perplexing present, half-citizens, half-protesters, or pure rebels, whose revolt, when it does not merely express itself in terror, takes, as in May 1968, the form of a half-finished blend of disparate, uprooted old ideas thrown into a Cuisinart for quick concoction? For a vision of the future as pure release, à la *Zéro de Conduite*, what slogan is more telling than “under the pavement, the beach”?

The disappearance of the past is partly a disappointment with that past—with what history and human action have wrought. Thus, it is very different from that deliberate historical break that revolutionaries intent on building a new order and creating a new man provoked in 1792, or in 1917, or in 1949 in China. It means exhaustion, not energy; drainage, not arson. In turn, the lack of a sense of the future has further depressed, devalued, and discolored the past; when one does not know where one is going, when there seems to be nowhere to go and nothing new and better to accomplish, what is the point of retracing one's steps? It takes a combination of faith in, ideas about, and will to build one's future to keep an interest in the past from becoming mere scholarship or leisure. There has been enough democratization in the sense of a liquidation of the residues from the nondemocratic past, enough denationalization—even in France—enough “dis-ideologization” (pardon the word) to disenchant the

past. But the result is a vacuum, not a will to build either a common European future or a new national one. As we have seen, this is a story in which cultural, political, economic, and social factors all mix.

In the nineteenth century, the nations of Western Europe were marked by an original combination of lively, even heated, ideological quarrels about different visions of the future, especially the political future; there was broad public consensus about the social order, the general direction, and the nation's role in the world. Those who felt left out had their own vision. Today, the quarrels are more about the present, and the public consensus, almost everywhere, is what I once called, for France, a consensus by default—the present is embraced less for its virtues than for its benefits (when they flow), less for its values than because any alternative is seen as either worse (whether it is the return of a frightening past experience or the imposition of the Soviet model) or more divisive. As a result, the continent that has always prided itself on its sense of roots and innovation appears more uprooted and less creative than the other model that makes Europeans so uncomfortable—the United States. Tocqueville's nightmare of disconnected individuals under a tutelary state is more present in Europe than in America. What he did not foresee was that individuals would also be disconnected from the past and the future, that voluntary associations (in which he saw a corrective to disconnection) would often only add group egoism to individual acquisitiveness, and that the state would be both bloated and trapped.

We are left then with two questions for morose or worried speculation. First, can one live forever in the economic present, comforting oneself with comparative statistics and a half-cozy, half-worried enjoyment of goods, freedom, and rights? Second, to what extent are the poverty of inspiration and imagination, the concentration on the here and now, related to the European nations' fall from international eminence? Are images of the past and visions of the future tied either to struggles for national identity or to the possibility of strutting on the world's stage, to fighting or speaking out for a great cause, national or not? France's intellectuals lost their voice at the moment when France ceased to be a pacesetter for other nations and a leader in world affairs. Britain's inability to have a clearer vision of its future than its partners cannot easily be explained as a result of the cult of growth (although it results in part from the penalties that must be paid for forgetting the criterion of efficiency).

It can be explained in part by the “end of ideology”; for even though the scope of ideological battles was not as wide there as on the Continent, Britain was once inspired by deep political and religious creeds. Still, this explanation does not go far enough. Was not Britain’s image of its future always associated with a vision of a great role in the world—and was not de Gaulle’s intuition about the necessity of such a role as a goad to internal creativity correct after all? If there is such a connection, the plight of Western Europe is not likely to end. For if the fall from the heights has broken that part of the *élan vital* that expresses itself, not in daily work and often-successful responses to the challenges of growth, but in the ability to find stimulation in the past and to will a future, then the very imprisonment in the present, the vital impulse’s engulfment in the daily adjustments and crises, makes the recovery of a sense of time (backward and forward) and the discovery of a common will unlikely. And so, each nation remains encased in its present self, giving an occasional backward glance at the recent past for remorse or consolation and a worried glance at the near future. Only a uniting Europe that could look at the whole of its fragmented past would be able to will a future. But how can it emerge, if its members have neither the drive nor the necessary incentives to transcend themselves into Europe?

ENDNOTES

I want to express my gratitude to my friend and colleague Judith Shklar, whose comments and suggestions have been invaluable—as usual.

¹Jean-Marie Domenach, *Ce que je crois* (Paris, 1978), 82.

²See Stanley Hoffman, “Europe’s Identity Crisis,” *Dædalus* (Fall 1964); “Obstinate or Obsolete,” *ibid.* (Summer 1966); “No Trumps, No Luck, No Will,” in James Chace and Earl Ravenal, eds., *Atlantis Lost* (New York: New York University Press, 1975); and “Uneven Allies,” in David Landes, ed., *Western Europe: The Trials of Partnership* (Lexington, 1976).

³J.-F. Deniau, *L’Europe interdite* (Paris, 1977), 150.

⁴Cf. Fritz Stern, “The Giant From Afar,” *Foreign Affairs* 56 (1)(October, 1977).

⁵Robert Paxton, *Vichy France* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972).

⁶See Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, vol.2, chaps. 5–6, or pt. 4.

⁷Domenach, 201.

⁸Quoted in Mark Poster, *Existential Marxism in Postwar France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 327.

- ⁹Raymond Aron, *L'Opium des intellectuels* (Paris, 1955; tr. from French, New York: University Press of America, 1985) and *Plaidoyer pour L'Europe décadente* (Paris, 1977; tr. from French, New York: University Press of America, 1984).
- ¹⁰Michel Crozier, in *The Crisis of Democracy* (New York: New York University Press, 1975), 39ff.
- ¹¹Jane Kramer, "Hamburg," *The New Yorker* (March 20, 1978).
- ¹²Cf. Gérard Vincent, *Les Lycéens* (Paris, 1971).
- ¹³See Jacques Juillard, *Contre la politique professionnelle* (Paris, 1978).
- ¹⁴Last sentence of Charles de Gaulle's, *Vers l'armée de métier* (Paris, 1934).
- ¹⁵See Sherry Turkle, *Psychoanalytic Politics: Freud's French Revolution* (New York: Basic Books, 1978).
- ¹⁶Alain Touraine, *L'Acteur et le système* (Paris, 1977).
- ¹⁷See Ralf Dahrendorf, *Angewandte Aufklärung* (Munich, 1963).
- ¹⁸Crozier, 33.
- ¹⁹See Suzanne Berger's essay "Reflections on Industrial Society: The Survival of the Traditional Sectors in France and Italy."
- ²⁰See "L'Amérique," *Nouvelle Ecole*, no. 27-8 (1975), esp. 64, 93ff.
- ²¹Raymond Aron, *Plaidoyer pour l'Europe décadente*, 136.
- ²²See "Etats-Unis," *Tel Quel*, nos. 71-3 (Fall 1977).

Judith N. Shklar

Learning without Knowing

IT IS NOT UNIMAGINABLE THAT SOMEDAY history will be considered obsolete. It will be said then that we know more than enough about the past, that history has reached its intellectual limits, and that its possibilities have all been exhausted. If this should ever be seriously claimed, it will not be because the boundaries of history as a field of knowledge have finally been reached. Rather, it will be because of moral revulsion inspired by historical inquiries and literature. In principle, history cannot come to an end, but there might be no first-rate minds willing to study it.¹

Historians can always find new subjects to consider. Obviously, the immediate past becomes a topic of historical concern tomorrow, often even before all the participants are dead. The opportunities for reinterpretation always remain open. No one needs to be reminded that every generation must reconsider its predecessors in the light of new experiences. The last word can never be said about history. There are at any time many good books on the same subject that in no way eliminate or diminish one another in the esteem of their public. Nevertheless, at various times since the first stirrings of the Enlightenment, historians have lived under the shadow of two self-accusations: uselessness and inaccuracy. And it would be these or similar charges rather than the inner logic of history that might reduce it again to its medieval insignificance. This is not a likely

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prospect but a reflection on the moral self-doubts that have characteristically placed limits on the possibilities of history as a form of knowledge.

Some sciences are discarded because they are found to be false, like phrenology. Others simply accomplish their task, like certain kinds of logic. Occasionally, a science is superseded by a superior one or transformed, even if its name does not alter, like pathology. History is not likely to suffer this fate. Inner tensions generated by moral uneasiness and self-rejection may, however, yield a pervasive sense that the discipline is futile, inadequate in its practices, and limited or misleading in its results. Historians have frequently experienced these periods of intense self-doubt. That does not mean they are likely to do so in the immediate future. On the contrary, at the moment most historians are seriously committed to the progress of their collective endeavors, and interest in the subject among the general public appears to be unflagging. To reflect on the recurrent attacks of paralyzing skepticism that have from time to time haunted historians is not to predict its imminent reemergence. It is, rather, meant to illuminate the patterns of moral thought that induce scholars to perceive the confines of their disciplines and the limits of their knowledge. The ways in which historians have measured and judged the possibilities of history is a general study in the practical import of various kinds of skepticism; for, while skepticism is sometimes invigorating and may inspire new ventures in historical research, it may also lead to a deadening sense of the limits of history.

Historians have a professional obligation to bring a skeptical judgment to bear on the study of the past. The records that the men and women of the past have left are usually misleading and inadequate in the quantity and quality of information they convey. Jumping to conclusions is not a sport in which a self-respecting historian can indulge. To be aware of that does, however, expose one to the hazards of Pyrrhonism. It is of course quite true, as philosophers have reminded us, that if we do not trust the evidence of the past, we cannot believe anything at all.² While that is correct as a general proposition, it does not touch the psychological impact of history. Indeed, the philosophy of history, whether epistemological or eschatological, has almost nothing to say to or about the working historian and his actual difficulties. "The cosmic periphery" never even comes close to the area where intellectual decisions are made

and professional standards established. The skepticism of historians reflects neither philosophical illiteracy nor competence. And it does not matter to historians that many other sciences also suffer from similar uncertainties.³ No one is truly comforted by the troubles of others. The difficulties of historians arise directly from their craft: historical evidence is simply unreliable. Anyone who has interrogated witnesses to an accident will know that the film *Rashomon* was not so wide of the mark. The historian must also distrust his own impartiality. Finally, new evidence and new interpretive skills combine to make history so unstable that a lifetime's work can be suddenly destroyed. And the intractable philosophical difficulties—such as what is evidence at all—do not go away, simply because working historians do not encounter them day in, day out. To become a historian is to learn what is and what is not to be recognized as a credible account, but this education does not occur in a vacuum. Philosophy is an unsettling presence for history.

These may be risks that all scientists face, but they affect historians with peculiar intensity. Because history is ineluctably didactic, general doubt tends to be translated into a sense of social futility. Even those historians who do not aspire to influence the public politically hope to do more than flatter and entertain their readers. The most ambitious expect to encourage desired social change; the most modest mean to dispel illusions and myths that thrive on historical errors. Even those historians who write for their professional peers expect history cumulatively to have a broadening and sobering impact on the practical consciousness of the educated public. Historians are therefore always at least partly teachers. With a few notable exceptions, most have spent their entire adult lives in universities, so that teaching has generally been a part of their daily self-awareness. Whatever the extent of a historian's didactic intentions may be, their fulfillment depends on his credibility. If he comes to doubt the possibility of recreating the past accurately, he also loses his social purpose. Skepticism thus undoes the historian doubly. Under these discouraging circumstances the most able young people may well decide to choose another scholarly career. Fortunately, historians do persevere because there is an elemental pleasure in recovering and shaping the records of the past into an explicable order. Moreover, in spite of their uncertainties, historians learn to establish and adhere to common standards of verification and communication. Theirs is not

a world of arbitrariness, because they have created a common professional ethos and an institutional setting within which history is appreciated, judged, and taught. There is thus protection against doubt, but it often falters. Not only can doubt undermine history as teaching, but didactic failure can also inspire severe doubt. Why, one then asks, does history achieve so little improvement? Could it be because it is inadequate knowledge?

The question that bedevils historians and also expresses their deepest worries is, What is the use of history? It had already tormented the *philosophes*, and as J. H. Plumb has noted, "In many ways the historian of today is in the position of the historian of the Enlightenment. He cannot accept the interpretation of the past of his immediate ancestors or even of the mass of society in which he lives. . . . Many historians therefore have taken refuge in the meaninglessness of history."⁴ Those who do not choose to take that easy path to melancholy have felt compelled to defend the utility of history. In this they also resemble their Enlightenment ancestors. One returns to the Enlightenment, then, because its uncertainties are alive again and because self-interrogation leads one to reflect on the origins of one's present condition. It was in the eighteenth century that intellectuals emerged as a self-conscious social group obliged to define and justify their social place and functions. They had to prove to themselves, as much as to their public, that they not only aspired to serve humanity, but that their writings were in actuality useful. It was not clear that history could meet that test. Had it been perceived as ineffectual, it could not have served as a refuge for them. To be futile was for the *philosophe* the ultimate failure. That is how craft and social role came to be ill at ease with each other in the mind of the historian.

Why was history so often condemned in the eighteenth century as frivolous learning? First of all, it was secondhand information taken on trust. It enjoyed none of the certainty that mathematics could claim. The historian was not an autonomous intellect directly in touch with truth. The world of two cultures was already deeply entrenched, and the republic of science already seemed to threaten the self-confidence of the older society of men of letters. More important, the subject matter of history was unedifying. As Locke put it, "What were those conquerors but the great butchers of mankind?"⁵ In both

cases, history fails as education and as a state of mind. It is a faulty way of thinking about unworthy subjects. Its uncertainty and uselessness reinforced each other in the eyes of its detractors. According to d'Alembert, "the bitter critics" of history said we had nothing to learn from such a record of error, superstition, and brutality. History was entertainment for an uncritical audience. It wasted time that might be better spent on thinking about God, nature, or oneself. Antiquity might be worth remembering, but all that was worth knowing about it was already known, so there was no point in adding erudite minutiae. In his defense of history d'Alembert necessarily stressed its moral advantages, since that was the issue. History "consoles, instructs, and encourages us" if it is written intelligently. It is, to be sure, highly speculative, but conjectural knowledge reminds us of our limitations and teaches tolerance and forbearance. Like medicine, history is finally uncertain, but "our only hope for improvement."⁶

Voltaire, who was a practicing historian, unlike d'Alembert, could think of even less to say on behalf of the subject. The only use history has is "that it teaches us our duties and rights without appearing to do so"—a moral primer, in short. In principle, he was committed to writing a new history that would deal with culture, peoples, and the heroes of the intellect instead of kings and wars. In practice, he did nothing of the sort, but agonized over the pitfalls that face the honest historian. Unreliable records and partisan, self-serving, stupid, and improbable testimony are all he receives from the past. Having turned to history in order to discredit the Christian tradition, Voltaire was eventually crippled by a historical Pyrrhonism that made it difficult for him to believe in learning much about the past. Caught between the allure of mathematical certainty and historical vagueness, he suffered the typical fate of historians who are incapable of trusting the evidence of the past enough to make an effort to put it into a new order.⁷

One obvious question raised by these doubts was whether so defective a subject should be taught to the young. Emile does not learn much about the past. What, after all, is history without war? Who needs scholars and intellectuals at all, for that matter? Unedifying, false, and useless, the history of the past was wholly inferior to the history of the human heart that Rousseau himself wrote. His skepticism was so complete that introspection was his only foothold

in reality. His history of the human heart was therefore, of necessity, his own story, but that was more instructive than the tales about knights and nobles. This was certainly a logical response to history in disgrace. As fable, it might be well suited to the human heart, but its facts were simply inconsequential.⁸

Not all forms of skepticism are as hostile to history as Voltaire's and Rousseau's. Different as these two were, both made a fetish of distrust. A calmer, more diffuse skepticism is quite likely to favor history. Gibbon's religion had been tepid, and so was his atheism. He was even surprised that his readers should be offended by his purely "human" account of the origin and spread of Christianity. His general skepticism, like Hume's, did not single out history for special doubts. Gibbon began with a general state of doubt but avoided historical Pyrrhonism because it would only lead him to the sort of skepticism that contradicts the experience of daily life and ends in madness. History as an exercise of common sense, of critical judgment and reliable erudition, was a hedge against the pathology of skepticism.⁹ That is why Gibbon considered himself a historian long before he had ever written a line. There is a passage in his memoirs that has puzzled many historians. Before he found his final subject, Gibbon toyed with a variety of possible topics. Among others, he considered the history of Charles VII of France, the crusade of Richard I, the life of Sir Walter Raleigh, and the history of Swiss liberty and that of Florence under the Medicis.¹⁰ There is no discernible relationship between these subjects, and none is suggested. Gibbon was simply hunting around for something to which he could attach his mind. What was never in any doubt was that he had a historian's mind.

"Without engaging in a metaphysical or rather verbal dispute, I *know* by experience from my early youth, I aspired to the character of an historian."¹¹ Gibbon, like most of the great historians of the subsequent century, wrote history because he felt compelled to do so, without a doubt about his vocation and with a feeling of utter indifference toward all and any metaphysical obstacles. When he entered Parliament, he noted that it was "a School of civil prudence, the first and most essential virtue of an historian."¹² His moral priorities were the exact reverse of Voltaire's and d'Alembert's. They expected history to instruct us in our social duties. Gibbon felt obliged to acquire political virtues in order to become a better

historian. He never even raised the question about the possible uses of history. On the contrary, he simply admired the scholars whose patient labors the *philosophes* disdained, and found Voltaire's histories excessively tendentious.¹³ History was its own civilized and civilizing reward; it was not meant to impart crude lessons about tyranny and superstition. Men obsessed with these aims were not in a position to write history for its own sake. The *philosophes* took it to be their duty to disabuse and mold public opinion. They were far from sure about their ability to do so and whether history could be a useful means to that end. When they did write history, it was inevitably very inferior to that of a genius who simply had a vocation to account for the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* and did so by remaining above the spectacle of human folly that he observed and recreated.

Even a brief look at the pronouncements of the great European historians of the post-Napoleonic era reveals attitudes as remote from Voltaire's as from ours. There is no moral or intellectual self-doubt. Yet, these were critical historians of the first order and in no sense credulous men. Some, like Ranke, were genuinely religious; others were not.¹⁴ All were deeply involved in the institutional life of their societies. The nation and the universities did not merely provide a setting within which historians worked. These scholars were actively involved in shaping and sustaining them. Ranke, Droysen, Mommsen, Michelet, Fustel de Coulanges, and Burckhardt were teachers in the most extensive and intense degree imaginable. They did not have to seek out a place in the polity or strive to replace some clerical body in ruling the empire of opinion. They had found an honorable estate for their calling.¹⁵ Theodor Mommsen was certainly critical of the practices of the German universities and deplored the superficialities of their offerings, but he did not doubt that a university degree was the only "patent of nobility" worth having or that history was as demanding as it was a noble vocation in Germany.¹⁶ When Droysen spoke of history as the study of "the self-consciousness of mankind," he was expressing a shared professional belief.¹⁷ It also implied that history had replaced philosophy as the summit of knowledge.

Even some of the more repressive German governments recognized the dignity of history and were ready to support mandarin historical faculties that were not expected to return any political favors. It was to be their glory to maintain the culture of Europe generally and of

their nation especially. Their task was to educate future scholars and a cultivated laity capable of continuing and promoting their literary and scientific inheritance. In the view of these mandarins, even the state existed to serve culture. They were intensely national in their loyalties, but it was a political allegiance that was more comprehensively cultural than governmental.¹⁸ The honors that the king of Prussia bestowed on Ranke were certainly deserved, but they signified official respect not only for a great scholar, but also for history generally. The kings of Bavaria were no less generous in their patronage of historians.¹⁹ By the middle of the nineteenth century the German universities and their historians enjoyed a degree of prestige that could not have been imagined fifty years earlier.²⁰ In France, the social respect for history and the cultural ideals supporting it were no less secure, in spite of the political difficulties suffered by individual historians. History as the epitome of mandarin culture was free from all the doubts that had assailed the *philosophes*.

The first two national reviews devoted to the profession spoke for all. The *Historische Zeitschrift* would be neither partisan in politics nor merely antiquarian. It would deal with the past as "a vital link to present-day life." That meant paying special attention to the modern era and to Germany. "For our science has, fortunately, attained such significance . . . that its existence and progress have become part of our national life." Somewhat later the *Revue historique* announced its prospective purposes in very similar terms: "France has always honored historical research. . . . the study of France's past . . . is today of national importance."²¹

The sense of national importance did not necessarily imply an excessive degree of aggressive nationalism.²² It reflected the deepest intellectual experience and the facts of life as then perceived. National sentiment had given historians a new and enormously energizing sense of continuity, a sense that, as most historians knew, the French Revolution had also rendered emotionally precious. When Fustel de Coulanges spoke with disdain of the facile analogies that the Jacobins had drawn between the classical past and their own situation, he revealed both the source and character of history as a science:

History is not an easy science, its subject is infinitely complex. . . . the chances for error are countless and no one can hope to escape them. If we are not discouraged . . . it is because we believe that the honest search for

truth is always rewarding. If we accomplish nothing else but throw some light on hitherto neglected points or call attention to some obscure problems, we shall not have labored in vain, and we should have contributed our share to the progress of historical science and to the knowledge of human value.²³

It was years before a professional British journal appeared, and it modestly announced itself as a forum for university scholars. The beginnings of historical scholarship in England had also been modest. The universities came to sponsor historical studies as a way of sidestepping the theological and sectarian wrangles that culminated in Newman's conversion.²⁴ There was no state sponsorship and no organized research. Scholarship was, moreover, from time to time threatened by wayward outsiders, such as the autodidactic Buckle and Carlyle. The first proclaimed that history would have to become a "science" or deserve to die, while the second would have it reject our "merely vulpine intellect" and restore us to "faith and action."²⁵ History was ill-served by these prescriptions because they raised exaggerated hopes it was bound to disappoint. Academic history was, by Continental standards, diffident. It is not surprising that Bury looked at the achievements of European scholarship with envy. In his inaugural address of 1902 he noted with admiration what "the coincidence of the scientific movement and resurgent nationality" had wrought. History had been a means to social unity, but "science had controlled while the national spirit had quickened" minds above ideological partiality. Nationality had broadened the intellect to encompass the development of peoples, not just of states. Bury saw a future for British historians in the study of the "Celtic civilization," the "ethnic problem," and the "part played by race . . . and the effects of race blending . . . and that mysterious pre-Aryan fore-world." Bury did not seem to feel challenged by other sciences, but he was afraid of democracy as a material and spiritual threat to historical work. As always, America was the metaphor for all that was feared at home. On the Continent the success of history was due to its public character and role. In England it remained private; and in a "democratic state [statesmen] are hampered by the views of unenlightened taxpayers. The wealthy private benefactors . . . , especially in America, are deplorably shortsighted; they think too much of direct results and immediate returns." They would have to be shown that history "is not a luxury . . . but a matter of inestimable concern

to the nation and the world.”²⁶ If one considers what Bury’s historical and political intentions were, one shudders. Mandarin attitudes were not impeccable then and are not so now.

Bury was not intellectually unsure of himself in the way that Voltaire had been, but he had every reason to worry about his immediate social environment. Moreover, America was in this case not merely a reminder of the unwelcome advent of plutocratic democracy at home. Turner had a decade earlier made a far more abject defense of the utility of history to this unresponsive public. He did not doubt the spiritual worth of history, but its public value was a concern for him. One of his most admiring pupils remembered that Turner was actually fond of quoting Droysen’s definition of history. He had as high a sense of his calling as any European historian, but he did not see himself as part of a mandarin culture. His burden of detachment was as heavy as theirs, even though, unlike them, he wrote a thoroughly democratic history of a democratic country. Like them, he had to make an effort to separate the man from the scholar.²⁷ But as an isolated, self-made mandarin he had to justify himself to a public that did not particularly respect history. Turner might rejoice in the knowledge that “even in young America Rome still lives,” but his audience might well not care. To them, he had to speak of progress to be traced and of history as lessons in good citizenship for the pupils of public schools. It should inspire, as it had in Germany, a sense of public service. Finally, it would help Americans understand those European immigrants and their socialist ideas that were altering the country.²⁸

Such were the humiliating claims that a learned and sensible man made on behalf of history as an intellectual discipline in a democratic society. So great a tension between personal and public views was bound to undermine the confidence of more sensitive historians. The fear of the cold indifference of the public was not altogether baseless, and found echoes in the minds of historians. For it was not, as Bury seems to think, just the vulgar who asked, “What is the use of history?” Historians also felt compelled to raise that devastating question. Those who were either not part of a stable university culture or who had no reason to look upon institutions of learning as the very heart of national life were most likely to doubt their own worth. They did so especially when they compared themselves with

their colleagues in the natural sciences. Social dislocation and skepticism then acted upon each other in such a way as to turn doubt into despair. One need only read Henry Adams's account of his spiritual sufferings to understand the dynamics of intellectual self-contempt.

A comparison between Henry Adams and Jacob Burckhardt easily suggests itself because they were so similar in their general outlook.²⁹ The differences may, however, be even more revealing. They shared a disdain for Grant's America, for what Burckhardt called "the arrogant belief in the moral superiority of the present," and a fear of the barbarians at the gate.³⁰ If anything, Burckhardt looked toward the future with more foreboding. The nightmare of a regimented egalitarian future did not make him a "pessimist," but a "malist," which was, in effect, an extreme apprehension.³¹ But it never caused him to doubt his calling as a historian. Quite on the contrary, he felt an intense duty to save the past from the ravages of the future. "We shall study," he told his students, "the recurrent, constant, and typical as echoing in us." The revolutionary upheavals of the age had given historians a new will to remember and preserve. The time was the best possible for history, with no governmental or ecclesiastical censorship to obstruct scholarship.³² In his middle years he was disappointed by his own work, but he blamed only himself for it. As a young man, proud of his work in Ranke's seminar, history had been "sheer poetry" for him, and his devotion did not waver.³³ Science posed no threat at all. "There is a friendship between science and history. . . . [both] are alone capable of a detached disinterested participation in the life of things." His skepticism was therefore only a scholarly necessity, not a consuming malaise. "False skepticism," by which he meant universal doubt, he thought a fashion that came and went. "True skepticism" is always welcome, however, because it is the only way to deal with flux, with "a world where beginnings and ends are unknown."³⁴ He was, finally, thoroughly at home in his native city and in its university. He refused to give public lectures in any city but Basle, where he thought it a gratifying civic obligation to address general audiences several times a year. Eventually he admitted to reducing all political questions to one: "Is it good for the University of Basle or not?"³⁵ In such a situation, it was not difficult to give one's life to what lasts, to the masterpieces of art, and to teach others to do so as well.

It is worth noting that what united history and science in Burckhardt's view was a common morality. Their utility or lack thereof did not concern him. Knowledge was for him not a product but a way of behaving, a specific type of self-restraint and an effort to efface the self, in order to promote a consciousness of the past that is quite simply loved, like poetry. It is not surprising that after the Second World War Burckhardt was revered as the very conscience of history, the best representative of its traditions, and, above all, as "the least deceived of nineteenth century historians."³⁶

Burckhardt had a younger friend who reminded him of the uselessness and even dangers of history. Nietzsche's *Use and Abuse of History* was very much meant for Burckhardt's eyes. History was worthless as mere memory, political lessons, and as a detached science. It must serve "unhistorical" forces such as art or vitality. Creativity required new myths, not academic history.³⁷ Burckhardt politely ignored Nietzsche's onslaught. It was above his "poor head." He did justify his own teaching as an effort to help his students toward a "personal possession of the past," rather than to throttle them with information, but so personal a remark was an evasion.³⁸ Burckhardt knew that Nietzsche was not criticizing him—indeed, he knew he admired him extravagantly—but was attacking history as a science. Burckhardt did not even choose to reply. His entire life was, after all, a repudiation.

Henry Adams had no comparable resilience. He accepted his detachment as a burden. Circumstances and personal character combined to make him a "freefloating" observer, but it was not a situation he liked. He had no respect for himself, for his work as a historian and as a teacher, or for his readers. America had lost its values, and there was nothing he could do to raise its standards. Service at Harvard was the "most honorable in America," but Adams found it a useless occupation. He had not been trained for a profession and had no desire to become a member of a scholarly society. History itself was "incoherent and immoral," and would have to be falsified to be taught to the young. It was, moreover, "a hundred years behind the experimental sciences" and without a theory of its own. It was neither as useful nor as certain as physics, chemistry, or economics. Nevertheless, Adams wrote many volumes of excellent history. When he considered his work, it disgusted him. No one wanted to read it; America had no use for the past, a point

Burckhardt had noted also. However, Adams went on to agree with his countrymen. Why should anyone read a mere "antiquarian" who really was lost in the eighteenth century and who had "no use for history or method"? It was useless as education, as knowledge, and as character building. However feebly, Adams therefore resorted to Nietzsche's advice and manufactured myths. Since cause and effect in history could not be known, the sequence of past events should be described in terms of "force and mass." Nice brutal words with a scientific ring to them, and if a need for order overwhelmed one, there were always the images of the virgin and the dynamo to satisfy a mind ignorant of science.³⁹

When one abstracts what was purely idiosyncratic and personal from Adams's account of his wasted learning, there remains a quite typically disoriented historian. He had studied hard without achieving social power or intellectual certainty. His skepticism was as limited as Voltaire's. He did not doubt the truth of science, even though its findings upset him. It was history alone that was inadequate. "The historian," he wrote, "must not try to know what is truth, if he values his honesty; for if he cares for his truths, he is certain to falsify his facts."⁴⁰ From this he went on to doubt the possibility of education in a world in constant social flux. Yesterday's lesson is today's misinformation and practical obstacle. This world of becoming, so unlike that of the eighteenth century, could not be understood, controlled, or enjoyed. All was ignorance, save science, which only explained the flux. For Adams, this meant not only that he had failed to discover the right education for himself, but also that there was no way of learning the psychic skills needed to survive as an intellectual being. Those who seek knowledge about man must fail to profit from learning.

Henry Adams's difficulties were in fact more severe than those of the *philosophes*. Every form of skepticism is the denial of some specific form of certainty. The two are unthinkable without each other. From mathematics and religion the *philosophes* had inherited criteria of certainty that history could not meet. Their notion of utility was, however, comparatively modest. History had to destroy superstition and teach political common sense. The tests of credibility for Henry Adams were different. Could history yield laws on which reliable predictions could be made? Did its truths "work"? Were there technically applicable principles? History completely failed

these tests. Moreover, standards of utility had been raised. To be useful, history must now do more than guide individuals; it must yield large measurable and tangible advantages, calculable as social wealth, for that had become the definition of utility. History did nothing to raise the standard of living or to promote the national interest abroad. For many, that was a death sentence pronounced on historical studies. Nevertheless, as one reads Adams, one recognizes that he willfully chose to leave Harvard and to adopt opinions that were designed to cast contempt on his own excellent work and that of other historians. He need not have been so self-destructive, and if he had reached a state of intellectual exhaustion, he had no one to blame but himself.

Henry Adams was not the last American historian to relive the predicament of the *philosophes* in this new and aggravated way. What came to be known as "relativism" worsened it for many scholars. The "true skepticism" of the historian, who recognizes the full extent of change within continuity and the distance that separates men in time, proved too much for some historians. In addition to being inaccurate and useless, history had to be written by men who were, like all their predecessors in history, part of their own time. Historians could not escape from their peers, their language, and their personal and public situation. It conditioned them, and they felt reduced. The fact that American history was now being pursued by a profession, socialized in universities and drawn from a broad geographic and social field, only seems to have enhanced the sense of being the spiritual prisoner of one's time and place.

Carl Becker was a perfect example of this mentality. History was, he fondly repeated after Voltaire, "a pack of tricks we play on the dead."⁴¹ For a historian who was not also a poet, playwright, novelist, philosopher, businessman, and wit, that was surely a mortifying admission. Becker did not enjoy his modesty. Detachment was impossible, even "the cause of not espousing any cause" was due to the prevailing "climate of opinion."⁴² Flawed records from the past, the necessity of selection, and the weaving of these remnants into a coherent account all removed the final work from the realm of reliable knowledge. Historians make myths, and these should at least be useful. Becker did not even believe that this wayward effort could succeed. For him, the very character of historical knowledge was self-destructive and psychologically intolerable. He therefore took

Rousseau's and Adams's path and rejected history both as education and as knowledge. Yet he was very far from being a general skeptic.⁴³

As in the case of Beard, Becker's skepticism was fueled by deep political emotions. At the end of a long debunking essay on historical facts, he suddenly, without even a transitional passage, moved from history's unreliability to its social inconsequence. The cause of this collapse of confidence was not primarily due to his adherence to a crude pragmatism. It came out of a devastating comparison between history and the natural sciences, now uneasy partners in American universities. History had failed even as a university subject, and no less so than as a social power. It was useless, because in a democracy, education meant no more than a distribution of information. Its universities were "institutions partly commercial and partly penal."⁴⁴ Teaching could not, in short, redeem history. Above all, the influence on public policy of one hundred years of historical research had been slight, especially when compared with the natural sciences, which inspired Becker's vision of utility and certainty. Inevitably, they also structured his skepticism and, with it, his desperate sense of futility. Both were expressions of a sense of inferiority vis-à-vis the natural sciences and an obviously overwhelming disillusionment. "A hundred years of scientific research has transformed the conditions of life. . . . It was scientific research that made the war of 1914, which historical research did nothing to prevent, a world war. . . . because of scientific research it became a systematic massed butchery such as no one had dreamed of or supposed possible."⁴⁵ The influence of history on social life had been "negligible," because it was incapable of preventing the self-destruction of the European world. It is very easy to perceive the flaws in the argument, but that does not lessen its interest. Becker identified usefulness with political power. He gratuitously assumed that all historians shared his political expectations and ends, and he was aghast at their ineffectuality. It was thus the situation of the intellectual classes and their failure to save the world that troubled him and made him lash out at "history."

Becker was not a particularly distinguished historian, but he still haunts the minds of historians, "an eccentric phenomenon" that continues to call for "special treatment," in the words of J. H. Hexter.⁴⁶ In his day he was widely respected by his peers and spoke for a substantial number among them. His very mediocrity makes him significant as a type. That he was not alone is equally clear. What

Becker and Beard were saying in an American context was very much like Karl Mannheim's sociology of knowledge that emerged in Weimar Germany. In the midst of the ruins of mandarin culture he did not repine, but sneered, at the pretensions of his predecessors. It had all been "ideology." Mannheim's proposition was simplicity itself. Every point of view is the expression of the social situation of those who pronounce it. Science was in fact excluded from this determination, because only a suprasocial observer can know the truth about the social causation that gave rise to ideologies and utopias. Moreover, eventually Mannheim came to insist that there was a pool of detached intellectuals who were rational, thanks to their disconnection from society. These paragons would therefore have both the interest and the ability to be the planners of a future democracy.⁴⁷ This caricature of *philosophe* ambitions differed from Becker's view only in its estimate of the kind of control science would exercise over society. Historians would remain the passive voices of their social groups, "relative" to their time and place. This disheartened Becker, but not Mannheim, who was sure of his own rationality as an observer of the relativity of others and who saw himself as the prophet of a new political class. He found in social science a replacement for the old mandarinism. Becker had to leave the world to what he took to be the destructive powers of science. He left it all in the hands of men who could neither know nor learn, because he had no mandarin resources at all, not even those of Turner, his teacher. Since no one was listening to history, Becker came to wonder whether it was really worth any attention. That is how the question of "What is the use?" arose, which, if it is asked under these spiritual circumstances, has to be answered negatively. Mannheim did not identify his own science with the irrationality he saw all around him and that he tried to explain. Becker was, however, defeated by unreason, because he thought he shared it.

In Becker's own eyes, it was not democracy that was disturbing his equilibrium. History was inherently too feeble to impose itself credibly on political man, as the comparison with the sciences revealed only too clearly. It was not merely the obstacles posed by democracy that Burckhardt, Adams, and Bury had seen. The whole European order had actually collapsed before his eyes, proving the moral weakness of all universities and all their historians. The war between history and democracy was in fact over. If history had any

use at all, it was to serve Mr. Everyman, from whom professional historians did not differ. Because they were slightly better informed, they could help Mr. Everyman brush off a few errors and myths, but they were no more impartial, and commanded no greater intellectual resources, than he. This was a democratic mind in full revolt against the pretensions of mandarinism. To be a man of his place and time meant, for Becker, to adopt the mores of this peculiar figment of an uncommon imagination: Mr. Everyman. Becker was to suffer a final shock when he discovered that some Everymen were Nazis and that there were historians who, sharing their climate of opinion, were also ready to offer their services to them. Always ready to accept new blows, he thought his brand of "relativism" had contributed to this disaster.⁴⁸ It is, in fact, difficult to see how a democratic modesty, perhaps a trifle spineless, could have contributed to the rigidly domineering fanaticism of the Third Reich.

In any event, the Second World War cured American historians of Becker's malady. Happy to distinguish themselves and their institutions from Europe, encouraged by grateful refugee scholars, they dwelt on the uniqueness of America and of its history. Mandarinism, the care and preservation of a culture by scholars who were impartial and aloof from political struggles, turned out to be a state of mind that was quite congenial to American historians and teachers celebrating a democratic culture.⁴⁹ For mandarinism is not simply the expression of a nineteenth-century European situation. It can arise in a variety of settings. For most historians, this is the best state of mind to bring to bear on their refractory material. In using a neutral vocabulary, in keeping within a collegial framework, and in choosing topics professionally recognized as important, they will be able to muster the evidence without undue distortion.⁵⁰ To be part of a republic of letters and adopt mandarin attitudes is the best choice for a historian who wants to preserve his self-confidence and avoid Becker's syndrome.

In spite of their eventual reconciliation, the quarrel between history and democracy had not, however, been without substance. Democratic theory, as has often been noted, does have decidedly unhistorical features. They are easily discernible in Paine and Jefferson. No generation owes anything to its predecessors, because the earth "belongs in usufruct to the living."⁵¹ When one speaks of "the

consent of the governed” and of majorities in general, one means those living “here and now,” not their predecessors or their successors. It is the ultimate argument against tradition and also against foresight, as Madison replied. Men who do not care about the past will care as little about posterity.⁵² Progress might automatically take care of the generations to come. The reverence needed for social cohesion, which Madison also mentioned, was wholly neglected. In the event the logic of democracy has not prevailed, few democrats have been as explicit about it as Jefferson had been. If democracy means a people’s self-appreciation, it should provide a large audience for popular national histories, as indeed it has. Nevertheless, science, which deals with the here and now, however much scientists depend on their predecessors and look to the future, never faced a comparable conflict with democracy. The historian who has no pure will to preserve the past, as Becker apparently did not, will regard this primacy of the here and now as a sentence of death upon history. The internalization of one aspect of democratic theory proved fatal for Becker and his kind. The sense of the past could withstand it in other historians, both American and European, though Otto Hintze, Ranke’s last heir, must remain the most extraordinary example of the intellectual will to survive honorably.⁵³

That democratization can be integrated into a mandarin mentality need not be doubted, even though it can be a very difficult exercise. When historians become aware of a new and less class-and-caste-divided public, and believe that they ought to become more democratic in their whole character, they may well face a real crisis of confidence, unlike Bury, who simply turned his back on that new world. After the Second World War a sudden rush of self-doubt spread among English historians. No one suffered anything comparable to Becker’s difficulties, and mandarin habits of mind were adapted to new views and circumstances. Nevertheless, democratization was not a simple experience, and it opened new avenues of thought that affected not the fringes of the profession, but some of its most established members. The basic question asked over and over again was whether there could be history without a directing moral purpose and sense of the future.⁵⁴ In a very real sense, the debate on either side of this issue was about whom historians should educate and how they should go about it. That history is meant to educate an identifiable public had always been understood, but the public had

altered, and historians wondered what their place now was. With that, the uses of history were again in doubt. Most English historians have been university teachers, but not all took that part of their work as seriously as Burckhardt did. Many had followed Voltaire in looking for a far more general influence because the subject matter of history was overwhelmingly political and universities trained public men. Hitler's war and the memories of the decade preceding it gave these concerns a new direction. Historians not only turned to contemporary history and ceased to eschew moral judgment, but many were also convinced that they had a special duty to give democratic society a sense of its future direction and purpose.

Democratization is transforming, and it demands both changes in the content of what is taught and in what is to be learned by historians. Since history is for and about everyone, and is, in fact, more or less taught to all schoolchildren, no democratic historian can remain indifferent to the needs of this enormous audience. That was a great perplexity for English historians. It does make a difference whether one teaches the future rulers of an empire or an undifferentiated middle class, an oligarchy or the people. Plumb, for one, welcomed a more extensive public because he was persuaded that democracy offers the best setting for the disinterested pursuit of historical learning. Until now, the past was exploited to serve some oligarchy or other. That sort of past is now dead. In its place, history as the science of social change can now at last reach its intellectual maturity. This would also have a direct educational value. History might yet serve the multitude by taming "the education in techniques" that prevails so generally.⁵⁵ Above all, it might teach people to acquire those flexible attitudes necessary to live and prosper in a world in flux. It is history for the future, but it is not directly didactic in a crude sense. It is a well-meaning manifesto, but it is the work of a newcomer to the intellectual world of democracy. Plumb invests history with the hopes that John Dewey had for an education in the natural sciences. The relation between school curriculum and character has proved to be more complicated than he imagined, and the fact is that Henry Adams was right. We do not know what sort of education can prepare young people for an uncertain future.

Given this difficulty, one might simply try to make the middle classes of a democracy happier. R. W. Southern thinks that when historians teach the citizens of a modest state, such as Great Britain,

they cannot just teach politics and law, but must expand their subject matter. More significantly, he thinks that one should teach history as a form of “enlightened enjoyment rather than as a rigid discipline.” To that end, he recommends intellectual history as the ideal teaching subject. “The study of the environment can never lose its interest, but all this is preparatory to the study of the thoughts and visions, moods and emotions and devotions of articulate people. These are the valuable deposits of the past.”⁵⁶ The guardianship of this legacy, as well as its dissemination for the personal development of students, is, in fact, the ultimate purpose of academic history. The moral stamina of the historian depends on recognizing and accepting that, for without it he will surely suffer the kind of disorienting skepticism that upset Voltaire and completely disintegrated Adams, Becker, and other victims of a rudderless intelligence.

That cultural history—the history of the creators of philosophy, literature of every kind, science, and the arts—ought in any case to be a primary concern of historians is not a new suggestion. Collingwood’s *Idea of History* is best taken as a defense of this history of states of mind. His argument is really quite simple. If history is about human consciousness, and if its end is human self-knowledge, then it is the study of minds. Every record that is examined is the expression of some thinking being. What historians look for is the mental world into which it fits. This reconstruction requires much imagination, empathy, and more than a touch of the novelist’s art. It is not like science.⁵⁷ Collingwood did not think that the mental world of the inarticulate should be recreated, which was probably mere snobbery. For teaching purposes, however, its restoration is really less significant than expanding the spiritual faculties of young people by making them rethink those “valuable deposits” left by the great men of the past. Cultural history is also the most suitable way of providing an essential common education in a fragmented world of knowledge and of preventing a pluralistic academic world from becoming a Hobbesian anarchy—or state. It can discipline this scholarly society as well as give students a shared mnemonic system. William James once noted that “you can give humanistic value to almost anything by teaching it historically.”⁵⁸ You can also make it more interesting. It is an impractical project only if one thinks that the educated young

individual gains nothing from possessing his past, sharing the language of its recreation with his fellows, and that the gift of "enlightened enjoyment" is beyond him. The chief difficulty is that it does call for a return to an older idea of usefulness as personal pleasure rather than as measurable social wealth.

If the history of ideas can reconcile historians to democracy as a subject of both teaching and learning, so can its very opposite: quantitative history. Nothing has done more to make peace between mandarin historians and democracy in America and France. Nothing has done more to quell skepticism among working historians. The democratization of values has in fact created a wholly new style of history. It devotes its attention to ordinary inarticulate people who leave few traces. It is of necessity statistical, since it deals with large groups of human beings and their usual concerns. Death, birth, food, migration, family life, conditions of labor, and disease are its obvious subjects. Quantification is only secondarily the instrument of accurate history. It is first of all and primarily the servant of the people. Originally, it was thought that such history would have to pay no attention to politics, the game of the elites. This is the history of the patients, not of the agents, of power, but a new sociological political history of the structures of power is not rejected, and even great men cannot entirely be excluded.⁵⁹ The history of political movements is, especially in America, far from alien to democratic thinking. It is, in fact, not so much quantification as expansion that is the trademark of democratic history. It includes groups never considered before: peasants in Europe, immigrants and blacks in America, and women and children everywhere. This all-embracing concern has its disadvantages. It is, paradoxically, highly undemocratic in one respect: readers do not like it. There is no public for quantitative and minutely sociological history. The closer history moves to the social sciences, the less popular it must be. The second disadvantage is specialization. It may enhance some skills, but it not only narrows the minds of young historians, it also poses a real threat to the quality of their work. Writing for a minuscule and intellectually highly homogeneous special audience can reduce criticism to details. It induces an atrophy of intellectual ambition. Nevertheless, democratization has given a "here-and-nowness" to history that has wiped away historical skepticism and its attendant despairs.

The plotting of long-range secular trends and mathematicization have not only given history a natural sciencelike appearance; they have reassured historians that theirs is a respectable endeavor. Productivity curves, price changes, demographic change, and the like that reflect "the typical and representative" are truly scientific, according to LeRoy Ladurie. Events and persons, the subject of the old history, are "merely anecdotal." His is not a view of science as effective technique, which was so fatal to Becker and his generation. This is a science that constructs "dynamic models" that may properly assess the relationships between diverse social phenomena over long periods of time. Unscientific history, which might appeal to nonprofessional audiences, belongs to the "cultural supermarket."⁶⁰ The intellectual barriers created by graphs and tables clearly have fortified the status of history. That is how quantification managed to create a democratic history that is not merely compatible with mandarin attitudes, but supports them. There is, moreover, no concern for usefulness at all. Indeed, one of the founders of this *real* history of Everyman, of the invisible many, Marc Bloch, opened his justly celebrated essay *The Historian's Craft* with the question "What is the use of history?" but did not bother to answer it. He quickly turned to the opportunities and technical refinements of historical scholarship. Moreover, he saw his task in a highly traditional way, in spite of the great changes he had himself introduced, because he saw these changes as expansions of the manner and matter of history, as an improvement, not as a rejection. For Bloch, human consciousness was still the subject matter of history. "The interrelations, confusions, and infections of human consciousness are for history reality itself." That was, to be sure, exactly what Droysen had said a century earlier. Bloch was, moreover, not trying to educate France as a whole, much less Everyman. He knew that a historical tradition flowed through him from his teachers to his pupils in an unbroken, though highly critical, argumentative, and changing line of communication.⁶¹ He spoke of his craft, not of his social role, and he found his usefulness in the former. This sense of intellectual continuity still prevails. His heirs rejoice in the democratization and expansion of historical subject matter that he began. Intellectually, there is now a tradition of historical writing that shuns the particular and stresses the general. Once it was very new, but now Bloch's successors look back to him

as he did to his teachers. No crisis of usefulness occurred, and there was no collapse of mandarin consciousness.⁶²

In their self-assurance, no less than in their awareness of the institutional requirements of their work, these new historians are very much like the most traditional English historians who see no need to reconsider either their craft or their role. In these respects they share the conservative common sense of G. R. Elton, who, in most respects, is a strictly political historian, differing from Bloch and his heirs quite significantly in his work. For Elton, university education does not alter to suit a changed clientele, or society. The educative value of history is that it gives a certain solidity to the understanding, though it can also corrupt. For undergraduates, its chief value is that it extends the intellectual imagination by showing them how very different things can be from what they are here and now.⁶³ The practicing historian ought not to concern himself with the usefulness of history at all; it will only lead him to fiddle with the evidence.⁶⁴ A concern for usefulness is proper only for the tasks of education, which are an integral part, socially and psychologically, of a historian's professional life, not a tax extracted from him by society. Even so great a historian as Maitland was crippled, in Elton's view, by having no research students and no serious institutional support.⁶⁵

Such views are perfectly suitable for an excellent historian who will surely train others like himself. Nevertheless, democratization and wars of our century were not trivial changes, and intellectual readjustment was unavoidable. A tradition is only as good as its ability to claim the allegiance of thinking men and women. An enlightened mandarin ought to ask why so many historians cannot accept his state of mind. One reason is that history can be taken as a refuge from the present, as the best path to the present, or as a link to the future. In the last case, especially if he has ideological loyalties, the historian will have every reason to make history politically effective here and now. An ardent democrat such as E. H. Carr accepts it as his obvious duty to give democratic society a sense of its future direction and moral purpose. Progress is certain, and historians must be, and in fact are, "consciously concerned to make contributions to the shaping of society in a particular mould." The historian has a special task: to help the majority of mankind to a "historical consciousness" and a positive sense of the inevitability of progress. Unlike Becker, Carr is buoyed by Mannheim's doctrine of the ideological sources of all

knowledge because he regards it as an invitation to join the conflict of opinions. Why seek a detachment and a certainty that must forever escape historians? He does not, moreover, compare himself unfavorably to the scientist in this respect, though his reasons for not doing so depend on a facile use of the notion of "indeterminacy" in physics.⁶⁶ The historian need be no more unsure of his facts than the physicist, and he has, in addition, a very special didactic social mandate.

Carr is, of course, quite right in recognizing that detachment is a pedagogic ideal, a striving for personal integrity by teachers in relation to their immediate and remote students. Max Weber had surely explained that years ago in *Science as a Vocation*. It is an aspiration that is never perfectly achieved, moreover, as most teachers know. Carr is, however, mistaken in thinking that impartiality is not also a purely scholarly goal. It used to be thought that it was easier for scientists to attain it than men of letters. That is an idea that is not as firmly held as it once was, not, however, because of the complexities of quantum physics, but because the social interactions among scientists and their place in the polity are known now to affect their work also. That does not mean that the pursuit of scientific knowledge is an uncontrolled personal impulse. It remains a highly disciplined activity in which personal inclination is checked by professional standards, tried and proved, and knowledge is steadily acquired, even if it lacks some of the security it once enjoyed. No historian should expect to enjoy either the kind of technological effect, public recognition, intellectual self-assurance, or new information that biologists achieve now. Carr is unrealistic in believing that he need no longer feel remote from scientists in these matters and that he is somehow joining them by rejecting the ethos of personal detachment as neither possible nor particularly worthwhile. His is, however, surely a plausible reaction for anyone who is so certain of his ability to promote the welfare of mankind through writing a specific kind of history. Nevertheless, he may expose himself to all the ravages of Becker's skepticism if he resigns himself to the malleability of facts.

There is something deeply self-defeating even in Carr's happy "relativism," because his credibility also depends on his accuracy. A less resolute mythmaker may not be able to convince even himself that a history made to suit the occasion is acceptable. To trade off

accuracy for usefulness seems worthwhile when one thinks that the alternative is an unattainable certainty sought at the cost of social irresponsibility. It may seem less appealing when the likelihood of intellectual demoralization is also taken into account, for only a very high level of ideological faith can render such an exchange tolerable. It has, of course, been argued that the mandarin stance is bound to support an established order and that it is therefore in its effects highly political. That does not reduce the difference between detachment in the interest of accuracy and a deliberate bending of the facts in one direction or the other. The mandarins may never reach their aims because of the limits of available evidence and their personal inadequacies, but they can be judged according to their avowed standards. If taxed with the indirect political implications of their position, they can only say that these positions fall outside their work as historians, even though as citizens they may have concerns that oblige them to live at least two, if not three, moral lives, which is difficult, but not impossible. The historians who write history to promote a given social end directly make a far less straightforward decision even though it may seem easier to have only a single life. For the primarily useful historians also make a claim to accuracy. Otherwise they would not be believed and would cease to be effective. In doing so, however, they involuntarily validate the mandarin ethos—which they reject. They will not fall victims to skepticism as readily as the complex mandarins. Radical historians tend to scorn “positivism” and “objectivity,” and argue about whether they should create a radical tradition or promote the coming revolution in their histories; but the spirit of doubt does not afflict their labors.⁶⁷ They do, however, live on the brink of dishonesty.

The demand for usefulness is always a threat to the equilibrium of the mandarin historians, who will be seized by skepticism when they are asked to account for themselves in terms that the craft of history cannot meet. That is the point at which the limits of history may be reached. Then it might be chosen as learning or abandoned as a moral and scientific failure. The past and an interest in it will, however, not disappear now that it has become a pervasive part of the cultivated consciousness. We no longer have the option of remaining ignorant of history, and, knowing that, historians will continue to work at their craft in a more or less mandarin manner.

They need not think of themselves as victims of time and circumstances. The setting within which they can work best is strengthened or enfeebled by what they do. It is not a lot into which they have been fitted by some external force. They have created a discipline that demands some skepticism and much discrimination, a fair amount of self-restraint, and an ability to endure inner conflicts. These are acquired attitudes adopted in order to learn and teach history. The awareness of these and other limitations is simply inherent in history, not a fate imposed upon the historian. The uses of history are not those of science, which may be socially painful, but historians are not mere boarders in the university or outsiders in the world of learning generally. The psychological perils of didactic uncertainty and of unsteady knowing are real enough, but one does not need to be superhuman to accept them. Mandarins join the republic of letters knowing its imperfections. They will benefit from those who reject it by being reminded that the history of the wretched of the earth always remains to be written and that intellectual standards have to be reaffirmed rationally. If historians cannot believe in their own worth enough to do so, history will have reached its limits, and there will be an end to learning.

ENDNOTES

¹I use the word *history* for both the subjects historians study and the works they write.

²See, for example, A. C. Danto, *Analytical Philosophy of History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 63–87; Isaiah Berlin, “The Concept of Scientific History,” in *Concepts and Categories*, ed. Henry Hardy (London: Hogarth Press, 1978), 103–42.

³Bernard Bailyn, “The Problems of the Working Historian,” 92–101; Lee Benson and Leonard Krieger, 32–41 and 136–42; Ernest Nagel, “Relativism and Some Problems of Working Historians,” 76–91; all in *Philosophy and History*, ed. Sidney Hook (New York: New York University Press, 1963).

⁴J. H. Plumb, *The Death of the Past* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1970), 138–39. See also his essay “The Historian’s Dilemma” in *Crisis in the Humanities*, ed. J. H. Plumb (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1964), 24–44. I am much indebted to the latter.

⁵John Locke, *Some Thoughts concerning Education*, *Works* (London, 1823), vol. 4, sec. 116, 182–84.

⁶Jean le Rond d’Alembert, “Reflexions sur l’histoire,” *Oeuvres complètes* (Geneva: Slatkine, 1967), 1–10.

- ⁷Voltaire, "Histoire," *Dictionnaire philosophique, Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Louis Moland (Paris: Garnier, 1877-1885) (19):346-70; J. H. Brumfitt, *Voltaire Historian* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958), passim.
- ⁸Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile, Oeuvres complètes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1959) (4):526-35; *Discours sur les sciences et les arts* (3):6-30.
- ⁹Robert Shackleton, "The Impact of French Literature on Gibbon," *Dædalus* (Summer 1976):37-48. See Hume, *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding* (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court, 1945), sec. 12, pt. 2.
- ¹⁰Edward Gibbon, *Memoirs of My Life*, ed. Georges Bonnard (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1966), 157-09, 120-23.
- ¹¹*Ibid.*, 119.
- ¹²*Ibid.*, 156.
- ¹³Jean Starobinski, "From the Decline of Erudition to the Decline of Nations," *Dædalus* (Summer 1976):189-207.
- ¹⁴Franklin L. Ford, "Ranke: Setting the Story Straight," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 87 (1975):57-75.
- ¹⁵Felix Gilbert, "The Professionalization of History in the Nineteenth Century," in *History*, ed. John Higham (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965), 320-39.
- ¹⁶Theodor Mommsen, "Rectorial Address," in *The Varieties of History*, ed. Fritz Stern (New York: Meridian Books, 1956), 191-96.
- ¹⁷Johann Droysen, "Art and Method," Stern, *Varieties of History*, 137-44.
- ¹⁸Fritz R. Ringer, *The Decline of the German Mandarins* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), passim.
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John Hope Franklin

The Land of Room Enough

ONE OF THE TRULY GREAT MOMENTS in modern history was the peopling of the New World by inhabitants of the Old, and one of its more magnificent themes was the promise that in the United States there was room enough for all who sought to escape the burden of class, religious, racial, and other discriminations. At first they came in small numbers, as if to test the viability of a New World civilization. Then they came in larger numbers, then in droves as they gained faith in the possibility of building a social order to fit their fondest dreams.

I

It did not matter to the Europeans that this New World was already inhabited and that the inhabitants were faring quite well without any assistance or intervention on the part of the white man. The Powhatans in Virginia, the Pequots in Massachusetts, and the Tuscaroras in the Carolinas were "civilized"—some by a future "official" designation, others by virtue of the state of their development. They had their own way of life, a religion, family life, an economy, and varying stages of political organization. They were more than prepared to pursue their own destiny and to view with some disdain the

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various Europeans who began to come to the New World in the seventeenth century.

There is no need to quibble over who came first. It could have been an intrepid Genoese sailor, a stouthearted Scandinavian, or a bold and daring African. They were as one in their search for a better life and in their courage to pursue it relentlessly. What is important is the success of Europeans in building a New World civilization that they perceived to be a distinct improvement over what they had left behind and their growing sense of confidence that this civilization was superior to anything they found here or anything that was likely to make it to these shores. Consequently, they simply appropriated the land with impunity, even if the Pequots or the Tuscaroras or whoever were peacefully settled and cultivating it. Worse still, they sought strenuously to enslave those people, as if it were their sacred duty to bring them under their control to use for their own purposes. It was best not only for themselves, they reasoned, but for the Indians as well.

What they found here, the Europeans claimed, was a state of heathenism that could not possibly claim respect or even tolerance. The condition of those native to the New World was so abjectly uncivilized as to invite the scorn of its observers, the spread of Christianity, the accumulation of public and private wealth through trade and exploitation, and the "enhancement of national and personal prestige and glory through colonization."¹ Consequently, no serious thought was given to the possibility that Native Americans might share equally or even substantially in the social order that grew out of the dreams of Europeans. They would have to wait for centuries before they could even get a hearing before those who presided over the courts that dispensed human justice and equality in the New World.

Europeans were persuaded not only that they were capable of building a civilization that was superior in every respect, but also that they themselves were superior to any of their contemporaries. New England settlers dismissed the hospitality and friendliness of the Native Americans as the "Lord's mercy to His Chosen People" rather than native good nature. In general, the New Englanders thought their genial hosts were trapped in the snare of the Devil, which would explain their unregenerate state.² In turn, it would explain the European sense of superiority over the indigenous peoples of the New

World and the justification for their taking whatever lands they desired in the name of Christian civilization.

II

The protracted contact of Europeans with Africans, beginning in the middle of the sixteenth century, led to generally unfavorable impressions that were to affect black-white relations profoundly from that day to the present. The firmest fact about an African was that he was black. Soon black became "an emotionally partisan color, the handmaid and symbol of baseness and evil, a sign of danger and repulsion."³ It was not long before a whole group of unattractive and undesirable qualities were ascribed to Africans, qualities that seemed for the most part to be permanent. They were ugly by reason of color, physiognomy, and hair texture. They were heathens, almost hopelessly so, since their heathenism was tied to their other base qualities. They were savages, and regardless of how different certain groups of them might be from each other, all of them seemed light-years behind the English in their stage of civilization. They were lustful and lecherous, and their sexuality was virtually beyond control. Finally, they represented the evil, a spectacle of disobedience for all the world to see, that resulted from the disobedience of Ham, the son of Noah, in begetting a child while in the Ark. This earned his son Canaan and all his descendants the eternal curse of God.⁴

Such were the attitudes of Europeans, especially Englishmen, toward Africans when they came to mainland English America early in the seventeenth century. These attitudes help to explain how Africans slipped almost unnoticed from a status of indentured servitude to one of permanent slavery before the middle of the century. A Virginia magistrate took the fateful step in 1642 when he sentenced two white indentured servants to an additional year of service for running away, and a black indentured servant to labor for the remainder of his life for precisely the same offense. In that single decision the judge not only consigned a black man to perpetual slavery, but in the process began the tradition of the crudest form of racial discrimination that would form so large a part of race relations over the ensuing three centuries. In short order slavery would be legalized, and slavery would be the lot for most blacks. In due course the body of law imposing distinctions based on African slavery and

inevitably on race would grow to the point that it commanded the attention of a large and important section of American jurisprudence.

It is not surprising that the slave code rested securely on the presumption that slavery was the best, if not the only, condition for Africans. It placed them under the constant supervision of their white masters, and if there was any conceivable good in them, this was easily the very best way of bringing it out. Their every waking hour was spent under the surveillance of the owner or his agent, while their hours of repose were carefully regulated by legislation as well as by plantation rules. Meanwhile, the most learned and influential men of the South built up, through their writings and speeches, a most elaborate justification and defense of Negro slavery. There were, of course, the scriptural defenses based on the curse of Canaan as well as the apparent acceptance of the institution during the pre-Christian *and* Christian eras. These were sufficient to win the support, at least, of the average God-fearing Southerner with or without slaves.⁵

If any doubters remained, they could consult the scientists who argued in lengthy treatises that certain anatomical attributes of Africans made them suitable for slavery in the South. Dr. Samuel A. Cartwright of New Orleans claimed that blacks could withstand the heat of the sun better than whites because of a peculiarity in the structure of the eye.⁶ Dr. Samuel G. Morton of Philadelphia, a noted craniologist, asserted that slavery was an acceptable status for the "pliant Negro, [who] yielding to his fate, and accommodating himself to his condition, bore his heavy burthen with comparative ease,"⁷ because the mean internal capacity of the Negro cranium was less by twelve cubic inches than that of the Anglo-Saxon. Louis Agassiz, Harvard's eminent naturalist, confirmed Morton's general claim by declaring that development of the brain of an adult Negro "never gets beyond that observable in the Caucasian in boyhood."⁸

Negro slavery, many claimed, was good for all concerned. It provided the slave with the only possible opportunity to become civilized and Christianized, thus bringing under control his lower, savage instincts. Meanwhile, since any society needed workers to provide the leisure necessary for the more gifted to elevate the social order, African workers were ideally suited for such function. The now classic statement made in 1854 by James H. Hammond of South Carolina set forth that position clearly:

In all social systems, there must be a class to do the menial duties, to perform the drudgery of life. That is, a class requiring but a low order of intellect and but little skill. . . . It constitutes the very mud-sill of society, and of political government, and you might as well attempt to build a house in the air, as to build one or the other, except on this mud-sill. Fortunately for the South, she found a race adapted to that purpose to her hand. . . . We use them for our purpose and call them slaves.⁹

In 1858 few persons in the United States and no one in the South would argue that Africans, as slaves, should not occupy an inferior legal and social position in American society. Even the abolitionists gave their attention not to the task of ameliorating conditions among slaves but to transforming slaves into free people. The ideology of white supremacy had become so deeply ingrained, however, that whites treated blacks as inferiors regardless of their status. It is instructive to recall, particularly when one searches for bases for the racial distinctions and discriminations directed against other non-whites in the United States, that whites made virtually no distinction among those blacks who were free and those who were slaves.

Almost from the beginning, American whites rejected the proposition that free blacks were entitled to the same treatment as other free persons. The sentencing in 1642 of a free black indentured servant to a life of slavery for running away was a precedent that subsequent authorities seemed all too eager to follow. In 1790 Congress enacted a law limiting naturalization to white aliens. Two years later it restricted enlistment in the militia to able-bodied white men, thus declaring to the five thousand Negroes who had fought in the War for Independence that their services were no longer required. And when Congress passed laws for the operation of the government when it moved to the new capitol at Washington in 1801, it excluded free blacks from participating in the affairs of that government. In addition, only free white males could be mayor or sit on the Board of Aldermen or the Board of the Common Council. In the following year, Congress passed a law, signed by President Thomas Jefferson, specifically excluding blacks from carrying the U.S. mail, a gratuitous expression of distrust of free Negroes.¹⁰

In the early nineteenth century, white Americans faced two issues that were related to the future of Negroes in the United States. The first was whether slaves should be treated as property or men. If they

were men, Gouverneur Morris had said to the Constitutional Convention in 1787, then make them citizens and let them vote. But the view of George Mason of Virginia and his supporters prevailed, and the Constitution did nothing to indicate that slaves were equal to others in the enjoyment of their rights. The second issue was whether free blacks should be treated as other free persons. In the first fifty years of the nation's history, the dominant view was that they should not be. Even if men did not violate the Constitution in maintaining slavery, they clearly violated it in denying full citizenship rights to free blacks.

If such rights could be denied to free blacks during slavery, it made it much easier to deny those rights to blacks in general once all of them were free. Indeed, the precedent of racial inequality had been so well established during slavery that it became the universal model in the years following the Civil War. Instead of emancipated blacks moving into a status of full equality at the close of the Civil War, they were consigned to a status where their color and previous condition of servitude were more important than their freedom in determining what they could and could not do. In other words, they were like free Negroes before the Civil War—pariahs, outcasts, and still unequal, even before the law.

III

By the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the United States had established a policy that denied to persons of African descent the opportunity of becoming assimilated. This was contrary to the general spirit and attitude toward others, especially those whose native homes were in Western Europe. It was made clear to those people that the process of complete Americanization was merely a matter of time, and their models were those sturdy colonists who had settled on one frontier or another at any time between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. But here were those other early settlers, Africans, who served as models for none of the peoples who were assimilable, but who provided an example when white Americans wanted to qualify the assimilability of other nonwhites who were becoming a problem.

Blacks could hardly have been used as an exact model for the development of a policy toward Native Americans, since the white

man's experiences with the two groups were so different. Nevertheless, blacks were seldom regarded as equal citizens, even after the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment, and one suspects that this general attitude toward blacks helped white Americans view Native Americans as deserving something less than equal treatment. After all, how could one respect a group that had the very first opportunity to develop the continent and had not done so? Furthermore, they proved to be obstructionists—sometimes mild, but sometimes fierce—to the white man's advance across the country. They were "failures" as slaves, and their independence was mistaken for indolence. When they pursued their own type of subsistence farming or hunting in the Gulf plains, they were driven out to make way for the Cotton Kingdom. And when they saw American "civilization" closing in on them and surrounding them, they fought their "last stand" without success but with independence and pride.

These responses proved, if anything, that Native Americans could not become an integral part of the white man's America. But something special had to be done for them, and that was the allotment of reservation lands combined with American citizenship. The effort to provide economic support and political enfranchisement for the freedmen had been a failure (W. E. B. DuBois called it a "splendid failure") because the government never provided an adequate economic base and because white Southerners and their Northern allies willed it to fail. Except in a negative way, the experience with the freedmen was of little help in the development of a government policy for Native Americans.

However strong the beliefs that Native Americans were inferior to whites, few if any whites placed Native Americans on the same degraded level with blacks. There was no elaborate ideology of white supremacy over Native Americans as there was over black Americans. Perhaps the relatively small numbers of Native Americans and their dispersal over a large area did not require whites to devote an excessive amount of time and thought to their inferiority. However bitter the fight over every inch of land that Native Americans were forced to yield, it did not leave any legacy of hate and degradation comparable to that left to blacks after the Civil War and Reconstruction.

Even if white Americans viewed Native Americans as inferior—and they did—and even if white Americans despised Native Americans for resisting their incursions—and they did—that did not

preclude an effort toward a generous solution of the "Indian problem" in both the public and private sectors. Churches and philanthropic organizations wanted to do something for the "savage Indian," and they established schools that would have a civilizing effect in the hope of awakening in him "broader desires and ampler wants." Meanwhile, Congress in 1887 passed the General Allotment Act that assigned 160 acres of land to each head of a family, with lesser amounts to bachelors, women, and minors, and conferred citizenship on those Indians who resided separate and apart from their tribe and "adopted the habits of civilized life."¹¹

American citizenship and a sedentary existence on a land allotment were insufficient to lure Native Americans into adopting the "habits of civilized life" of white Americans. Since the Allotment Act provided for the purchase by the federal government of reservation lands that remained after allotment, with the sale price held in trust for the "education and civilization" of Native Americans, reformers and policymakers alike felt certain that the new dispensation was headed for success. Some observers compared the act in historical importance to the Magna Carta or the Declaration of Independence for whites, or the Emancipation Proclamation for blacks. In actual practice, much of the unallotted land fell into the hands of whites, since the secretary of the interior tended to force allotment on the tribes faster than they were ready to accept it. Soon Congress provided that even the allotted lands could be leased to others—namely, whites—for agriculture, grazing, mining, and lumbering. By the end of the century, it was clear that whites were benefiting from the Allotment Act more than Native Americans.

Any observer of the 1890s looking at the policy of the United States toward black Americans and Native Americans must have been puzzled at what had been done in the name of reform. For persons of African descent, emancipation did not relieve them of their degraded position. Meanwhile, the judicial interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment, the centerpiece of the Reconstruction program, benefited railroads and other corporations much more than it benefited the freedmen for whom it was ostensibly intended. After a century of dishonor—the phrase used by Helen Hunt Jackson as the title of her book detailing Indian policy—Americans could not be certain that the new day for Native Americans was better than the old. Indeed, the old assumptions regarding Indian inferiority and

unassimilability persisted, and no amount of so-called reform legislation could change the attitudes of white Americans toward those who were already here when they arrived. For black men and red men, the American creed of equality was scarcely more than a mirage in the early years of the twentieth century.

IV

Perhaps it was the new social Darwinism of the late nineteenth century that counseled a rejection of the Negro's claim for equality, for he had been tested and found wanting; and that permitted a kind of condescending benevolence toward the Native American, for even as the white man took his lands, he was still the Noble Savage. But a new vantage point, that of the white man's burden, began to influence America's policies and attitudes toward darker peoples generally. In extending its influence abroad, the most dramatic example of which resulted from its acquisitions in the Spanish-American War, the United States confronted the problem of dealing with Cubans, Filipinos, Puerto Ricans, and other similar groups outside continental United States. Up to this time, U.S. experience in such matters had been limited to the Eskimos of Alaska, acquired in 1867, and the Polynesian peoples of Hawaii, annexed in 1898 after several earlier efforts.

It was not possible to anticipate either the pleasures or the pain that Puerto Rico would bring to the United States when it was acquired in 1898. What could have been anticipated, it seems, was that in dealing with a territory not contiguous to the United States, the inevitable question of its future status would arise. But since there were as yet no clear precedents, the United States was not ready to answer the question. And in dealing with a territory, many of whose people were of African descent or had some admixture of African, Indian, and Spanish ancestry, it was dealing with a race problem not unlike the one in the United States. This one would be almost hopelessly complicated, however, by the difference in perceptions between the people of the United States and those of Puerto Rico of the importance of race. Although white Americans, by tradition and legislation, regarded all such persons as Negroes, and thus subject to the degraded opinion held of them, Puerto Ricans, with all the rich and subtle color distinctions they made among themselves, could not

possibly have understood clearly the implications of the white Americans' classification of them.

Once Puerto Ricans began to migrate to the United States, especially after this country conferred citizenship on them in 1917, they discovered what it meant to be a pariah in the country that had adopted them. They were trying to get away from the sugar plantations that had come to be known as "Uncle Sam's sweatshops," but on the mainland they could not be certain that they would obtain *any* kind of work. Their initial optimism was not realized, and soon some began to return to the island. It was obvious, however, that to return was not a solution, and more and more Puerto Ricans became permanent residents of the mainland. By 1930 there were forty-five thousand Puerto Ricans in New York City alone; their numbers increased steadily and reached about one million by 1970. By that time they were in other American cities, most notably Boston, Philadelphia, Miami, and Chicago.

In one sense, Puerto Ricans presented a picture of the classic immigrant leaving home to better his condition, bringing with him such ethnic identifications as history, culture, religion, and language. In due course they could be assimilated and completely Americanized. In another sense, however, they were atypical, because a substantial number of them possessed sufficient African features to be noticeable. The result was as confusing to them as it was to whites, who were quick to reject the darker ones as unassimilable and to consign them to a permanent low status in the social and economic order. The tragedy of the resulting segregation and discrimination was even greater when it cut across family lines, where a portion of a family was regarded as black and treated as such, while another portion was accepted as white and accorded privileges denied their darker sons and daughters or brothers and sisters.

The implications of this for Negro-Puerto Rican relations were as unfortunate as they were inevitable. Both groups were on the lower rungs of the economic ladder, and they competed, sometimes quite bitterly, for the community's most unattractive, lowest-paying jobs. And in the early years of Puerto Rican migration, greater experience and better language facility frequently gave blacks the edge, thus deepening the antagonisms between the two groups. At the same time, many Puerto Ricans were mistaken for Negro Americans and treated as such, causing them to go to great lengths to renounce any

affiliation or identification with their African cousins. On occasion they expressed a preference for the terms *Latino* or *Hispanic* if that would assist them in escaping from the term *Puerto Rican*, which became, at times, almost pejorative. The white community was not above pitting the two wretched minorities against one another where competition for jobs or housing was concerned and where it was to the whites' advantage to do so.

After thirty years of large-scale migration, the 1.7 million Puerto Ricans on the mainland in 1977 were no better off, and possibly even worse, than those who came a generation earlier.¹² They remained at the bottom of the economic ladder, lower than other Hispanics as well as black Americans. Their situation remained desperate: they still lived in squalor in some of the nation's worst slums, were victims of some of the nation's worst racism, and had failed, except in a very few cases, to rise significantly on the political or economic ladder. The time came when their lowly status on the mainland prompted them to join those forces back home who contended that complete independence from American domination, rather than commonwealth status or statehood, was the only solution worth seeking. Neither Native Americans nor Negro Americans provided any meaningful experience that seemed applicable in dealing with the problem of Puerto Ricans in the United States.

V

Like the Puerto Ricans and Native Americans, Mexican Americans in the United States were essentially people of the New World, some of them an admixture of Indian, Spanish, and African. When they began to migrate to the United States after 1900, they had behind them a long history of conflict with the people of America. Mexicans had been opposed to the incursions of people from the United States during the early days of Mexico's independence, in the 1820s and 1830s, especially those who insisted on bringing their slaves. Shortly after independence, Mexico had outlawed slavery, as had all other Latin American countries, except Cuba and Brazil. Their resistance to America's encroachments brought about a full-scale independence movement when American settlers in Texas refused to accept Mexican law. Annexation of Texas in 1845 and the enormous cession of lands to the United States after the Mexican War in 1848 left Mexico

bereft of its richest and most desirable lands. With Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, Utah, and California in the hands of the United States, the fledgling, beaten republic to the south had few resources with which to repair her losses.

Mexico's disadvantages were numerous. Her people were dark-skinned, and Americans were developing increasing variations on the theme of white supremacy. They were Roman Catholic at a time when the Protestant crusade was reaching its peak in the United States. Mexican culture was regarded by Americans as decadent and inferior, whereas their own was reaching perfection, if one listened to Southerners, or was in a progressive, experimental stage, according to liberal Northerners. Consequently, it was assumed that Mexicans living in their own ceded territories were unable to contribute much, if anything, to the march of civilization. And contact with them merely confirmed the lowest opinions that white Americans had of them. White squatters regularly appropriated land held by Mexicans in California and other areas in the Southwest, calling their victims lazy, indolent, unambitious, and undeserving of the lands they occupied.

Under the circumstances, it would not be surprising if the Mexicans had preferred to maintain some distance between themselves and the white Americans. But with hard times and few opportunities at home, the United States was one of the few promising places within their reach, if only they could overcome the obvious prejudices against them. They began to migrate to the United States in substantial numbers in the early years of the century. Unlike the Puerto Ricans who flocked to the city, the Mexicans initially went into the rural areas to become farm laborers. Indeed, they were often recruited and brought into the country to take up the slack during periods of labor shortages. Some came on their own, with neither visas nor passports, thus becoming particularly vulnerable as "undocumented aliens." As fruit and vegetable pickers in California, Arizona, Idaho, Washington, and Colorado, they were exploited mercilessly by the large farmers, and when their own leaders began to organize them into unions, the stage was set for reprisals, deportations, and other actions to blunt the effects of unionization.

Those who went to the cities faced discrimination in housing and jobs, and competition with blacks and Puerto Ricans. Everywhere, even in the Southwest, where many had always lived and to which

large numbers came annually from across the border, Mexican Americans received the distinct impression that, aside from their seasonal or periodic labor, they were not to enjoy the advantages and blessings of American civilization. In due course, however, leaders would rise among them who could speak out in their behalf and demand equality of treatment as workers and as human beings. If their demands were not always heeded, no one could any longer ignore them. They added significantly to the racial and ethnic quandary all Americans faced in the closing decades of the twentieth century.

Although many Mexican Americans were citizens of the United States, there were many others, resident in the United States, who were citizens of Mexico. Their treatment, therefore, was of interest not only to their union leaders or American public officials at different levels of jurisdiction, but to the government of Mexico as well. And their flagrant mistreatment—as workers, in seeking housing, or as victims of brutality at the hands of the local police—merely added to the litany of grievances that the Mexican government had accumulated through the years. More than once, particularly in recent years, their treatment was the subject of delicate discussions between the heads of state or other high officials on both sides of the border. Even if such discussions did not result in a dramatic improvement of their lot, Mexican Americans could get some satisfaction from the knowledge that a sovereign state, with increasing leverage, could espouse their cause if it were inclined to do so. Neither Native Americans, black Americans, nor Puerto Ricans were in such an enviable position.

VI

One cannot help but be impressed by the bonds of disadvantage and even degradation that tie these four groups of Americans together. In varying degrees they were victims of American racism, developed initially out of the American experience with persons of African descent, but extended to others of darker hue—Native Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Mexican Americans—as they sought equal treatment at the hands of white Americans. Their struggle for full equality has been an ongoing one, and they would have much to tell one another both about their limited successes and numerous failures.

They are, in general, clustered at the lower end of the occupational and economic scale, victims of discrimination in employment and in compensation for work done. They are for the most part confined to certain sections of the city where housing, although expensive, is limited and frequently substandard. All too often the several groups are in fierce competition with one another for jobs, housing, and other favors of society. Such competition leads to invidious comparisons, jealousy, and envy, and they become easy pawns in the game played by the white majority of pitting one wretched group against the others.

Despite the fact that black Americans were clearly the greatest victims of a well-defined racism that dated at least from the seventeenth century, the other groups tended to feel that blacks had been the most successful in combating racism. The examples of their civil rights organizations, their activities in the field of litigation, and their political influence are a source of envy as well as admiration, but what is more important and to the point is that they have provided inspiration for the others. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and a host of presidential orders, commissions, and agencies are seen as coming primarily from the efforts of Negro Americans. Blacks are seen, moreover, as making rapid strides up the economic ladder. No other group can boast of the kinds of gains made by blacks that are heralded in each issue of *Black Enterprise* and *Ebony*. In reading the glowing accounts of their successes and achievements, we have to remind ourselves that these are exceptions, that the percentage of unemployed blacks in the work force is twice that of whites, and that in many cities across the country as many as 40 percent of black teenagers are unemployed. In such dismal matters they are closer to the other groups than one might think.

There is little doubt that the vigorous drive by blacks for equality during the past two decades has encouraged other groups to make similar moves. This is not to suggest that the movement in other groups was wholly derivative, but that the climate of the sixties, in which blacks had an important role, stimulated a widespread movement for equality among numerous groups. Thus, *La Causa* of the mid-sixties became a crusade to assert the dignity of Mexican Americans, and the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund undertook to protect the rights of its people, as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund had been doing for blacks since the 1930s.

Likewise, the American Indian Movement (AIM), which began in the 1960s, was notably successful in publicizing the plight of Native Americans and winning support from a wide variety of sources. Puerto Ricans did not need the climate of the 1960s to spawn movements for dignity, self-respect, and even independence. Almost from the time they began to come to the mainland in significant numbers, they founded organizations to improve their condition. Today they range from the quite proper Puerto Rican Association for Community Affairs in New York City to the radical, terrorist FALN (Armed Forces of National Liberation).

Despite the common bond of discrimination that all four groups share, there are significant differences. One of these has to do with language and culture. Puerto Ricans and Mexican Americans are proud of their distinct cultures and especially of their language. One Puerto Rican recently said that the Spanish language was for his people a unifying factor and a guardian of their identity.¹³ Both groups tend to hold fast to it, the Puerto Ricans apparently with greater tenacity than the Mexican Americans. Blacks and Native Americans, on the other hand, have only English as a common language and cultures that have been almost completely diluted and eclipsed by the culture of the dominant racial and ethnic groups.

Another difference is that Puerto Ricans on the mainland have a homeland to which they are deeply and permanently attached. Frequent visits, where possible, reinforce the attachment and cause many to regard themselves as Puerto Ricans first and Americans second. Mexican Americans do not seem to be nearly as deeply attached to Mexico. Many of them are not immigrants but have always lived on the lands ceded by Mexico to the United States. Others were recruited from Mexico as laborers, and under the circumstances, would just as soon forget the wretched conditions from which they came. Still others came without permission and return the same way if and when they care to. On the other hand, the connections of Afro-Americans with their ancestral lands lie deep in the past. They came to the New World involuntarily and for centuries had no opportunity to return. In recent years, with the independence of African states and with the example of blacks serving as political and economic leaders in numerous countries, Afro-Americans have experienced a renewed interest in the land of their fathers.

Native Americans had no such experiences. Their attachment to their own land was attested to by their resentment of the way in which Europeans dispossessed them. But nothing could dispossess them of the notion that America was *their* homeland. As the first settlers, they never conceded that others, in the name of a superior civilization, had a right to push them aside. Without the power or the weapons to turn back the Europeans, the Native Americans finally made their peace with them on the theory that the New World was indeed the land of room enough. Only through the kind of litigation that black Americans had pushed were Native Americans able to hold on to the theory and then recover and save some of the land as well as some of the rights for themselves.

If being an American is to share in the history and culture of the country, to contribute to its well-being, and to be a part of its future, the Americanism of these four groups cannot be successfully challenged by anyone. The Indians were here before any other known group, and their imprint has had a profound impact on virtually every aspect of American life and history. For three centuries Afro-Americans have been a central feature of America's history, and no amount of gainsaying can eradicate their importance. Mexican Americans are native to much of this country's Southwest, and there as well as elsewhere their culture is as American as that claimed by any former European. Likewise, Puerto Ricans, both in their island homeland and in mainland America, have added both substance and flavor to American culture. These groups need not yield to any group in their claim to be integral parts of American life, even as they remain conscious of their own distinctiveness.

One of the tragedies of the present situation is that the sense of sharing common problems and seeking common goals is minimal. It is true that under the circumstances the four groups are almost natural competitors, since they must scratch around at the bottom of the economic ladder for whatever falls from above. But it is also true that with increased education and greater technical skills, and with a better understanding of the benefits of cooperation, they could effect the kind of intergroup arrangements that would transcend and neutralize many of the divisive forces that exist. In an age of shrinking economic opportunities, it is "more tempting for one group to see the other as a potential rival than as an ally," as Joel Dreyfuss has observed.¹⁴ Even so, the alternative to cooperation is a continuation

of the crudest forms of bitter group rivalries, energetically promoted by the groups that have always benefited from such rivalries. The most compelling argument clearly favors an elimination of suspicions, jealousies, and rivalries, and the adoption of all feasible methods of peaceful cooperation. This is not to suggest that their ultimate goals are, or should be, identical.

It has become fashionable in the past three or four decades for various hyphenated Americans to emphasize the distinctive aspects of their respective cultures—as though these groups have been so successfully and securely assimilated that they can afford to look back to their origins and pay homage to their languages, histories, and the special features of their culture. This new way of looking at themselves and their past has become a luxury no less important than their expensive homes and automobiles. These same decades witnessed an important rise in the decibels of protest and in the crusade for equality on the part of Native Americans, black Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Mexican Americans. It was as though this was *not* the land of room enough and that the assimilation of the others had been accomplished at their expense. These cries of anguish and these demands for attention to their problems serve as a reminder that the very term *assimilability* is one that suggests there are problems that lie outside its scope. These are the problems of those who have not been assimilated. And as a Puerto Rican woman recently said, “There is never a lack of problems. The poor live off hope.”¹⁵

ENDNOTES

¹Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Knopf, 1978), 116.

²*Ibid.*, 83.

³Winthrop Jordan, *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550–1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 7.

⁴*Ibid.*, 60–62.

⁵The arguments are conveniently summarized in William S. Jenkins, *Pro-Slavery Thought in the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1935). Excerpts from the principal writers are in *Slavery Defended: The Views of the Old South*, ed. Eric L. McKittrick (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963).

⁶Jenkins, *Pro-Slavery Thought*, 249.

⁷Quoted in William Stanton, *The Leopard's Spots: Scientific Attitudes Toward Race in America, 1815–1859* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 34.

⁸Jenkins, *Pro-Slavery Thought*, 249, 250.

⁹McKittrick, *Slavery Defended*, 122.

¹⁰These laws are discussed in John Hope Franklin, *Racial Equality in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 24–26.

¹¹Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian*, 175.

¹²*The New York Times*, 11 September 1977.

¹³*The New York Times*, 13 May 1980.

¹⁴Joel Dreyfuss, "Blacks and Hispanics, Coalition or Confrontation?" *Black Enterprise* 9 (1979): 23.

¹⁵*The New York Times*, 12 May 1980.

Mary Douglas

The Effects of Modernization on Religious Change

EVENTS HAVE TAKEN RELIGIOUS STUDIES BY SURPRISE. This set of university institutions devoted to understanding religion without the constraints of the divinity school has generally included religious change in its subject matter. No one, however, foresaw the recent revivals of traditional religious forms. According to an extensive literature, religious change in modern times happens in only two ways—the falling off of worship in traditional Christian churches, and the appearance of new cults, not expected to endure. No one credited the traditional religions with enough vitality to inspire large-scale political revolt. The main direction of empirical inquiry was concerned with the inception, growth, and decline of small communities and their relations to the outside society,¹ and was matched by an elaborate finesse in distinguishing the terms *sect*, *cult*, and *movement*. Thus no one foretold the resurgence of Islam. Its well-known expansion in Africa was not expected to presage anything for its strength in modern Arabia—but why not? Habituated as we are to Catholic bishops supporting reactionary forces in South America, who was ready to interpret their radical politics in other parts of that continent? The civil war conducted in Lebanon in the rival names of Catholicism and Islam was not on the syllabus of courses on religious change, any more than was the terrorism always threatening to turn the strife of Irish Catholics and Protestants into civil war. Perhaps these bloody events have been classified as religious

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continuation rather than change, or perhaps religious studies were too polite to talk about the bad religious things happening abroad. But the explicitly Catholic uprising in Poland, which evokes deep Western admiration, was as unpredicted as the rise of the fundamentalist churches in America.

Religious studies were taken unawares because of the rigid structure of their assumptions. Their eyes were glued to those conditions of modern life identified by Weber as antipathetic to religion. Perhaps, also, their inclinations misled them in ways that apply to the social sciences more generally. If the renewal of right-wing political values in the West surprised all political scientists, it is natural that those who least welcomed it would have been the most surprised. Similarly, certain religious forms might have a natural appeal to intellectuals if they are going to be religious at all. People whose occupations do not require submission to authority or conformity to outward forms, and who are paid to ask searching questions and to take an independent stance, are likely to be more drawn to a personal style of religious worship than to a publicly conforming one. Their own religious preferences could conceivably dim their perception of what other people like.

Such an explanation of a theoretical weakness is pertinent here, since one of the shortcomings of all the social sciences has been the neglect of beliefs and values, and the failure to establish a critical methodology for examining cultural bias. In the sociology of science, it is widely accepted that the choice and framing of problems and the judgment on procedures for inquiry are influenced by social concerns. Some considerable sophistication on the effect of such choices and judgments could be expected in a field such as religious studies, where, after all, ideas and values are the very subject matter. But, alas, the social critique of all ideas, which Louis Dupré in an exemplary essay on culture sees as one of the main tasks of twentieth-century sociology,² has been applied only spottily to the effects of modernization on religion. A caricature of the modern consciousness has credibility only if the contrasting caricature of premoderns is accepted. The latter are presented as custom-bound: so Malinowski wrote in vain,³ as having fewer sexual choices and stricter sexual morality; so Mead wrote in vain,⁴ as having a comfortable, nonmoralizing, nonconfrontational relation with their gods; so all the social anthropologists wrote in vain. It is tempting to interpret the myopia

in sociological studies as a failure of modernization that could have been avoided if certain anthropological methods of inquiry had been adopted.

Three assumptions that dominate contemporary religious studies, and that seem most questionable to me, tend to protect the subject from the probing of sociological criticism and from uncomfortable comparisons. The most fundamental of these assumptions writes into the definition of the subject the notion that religion is good for the human psyche. To assume that religion has integrative functions or is otherwise conducive to the good life makes immediate sense to those who start from the same assumption. However, the usefulness of a definition depends on the use to which it is to be put. Clearly, this definition leaves out a lot of religious behavior that is widely regarded as emotionally restrictive, bigoted, fanatical, or psychotic. Thus the first question is why the subject should be so selectively defined.

The second of these assumptions is that moderns are utterly different from everyone else because of modernization. I believe this view to be highly subjective. Every tribe that we study believes in its own uniqueness. No one doubts that our modernity follows from a unique development of technology, science, and bureaucracy. What is more dubious is the general nineteenth-century presumption that modernity adversely affects religion by taking the wonder and mystery out of the universe—as if religion depends more on the physical environment than on the quality of social relations. This general demystification is supposed to have reduced the credibility of old, traditional forms of religion that once sacralized social institutions and allowed them to partake of divine mystery. These two assumptions have led scholarship to focus on secularization. Since religion is defined as having integrative value for the personality, our present psychological troubles can then be attributed to the lack of religion, an analysis that leads to the anxious question whether any religious belief is possible for modern man. Fortunately, an alternative form of religious life is available that does not try to sacralize social institutions and is not inhibited by modernization. In the wake of this tradition, distinguished scholars have recommended the cultivation of spiritual awareness in the interior self as the general cure for the ills of modern disbelief. One trouble with this line of argument is that a hidden theological point of view is offered under the guise of independent social analysis, a point I will return to later.

The third assumption is the idea that culture is always capable of being somehow autonomous and is becoming so increasingly in modern times. Again the anthropologist recognizes a tribal style of thinking that claims autonomy for its own world view. Those who write on religious studies believe that a historic schism between moderns and the rest of the world allows moderns to claim immunity from the social influences that help to interpret the shared beliefs of other civilizations: because of our cultural autonomy those sociological analyses do not apply to us. Thus the strong cutting edge of sociological criticism is deflected. These three assumptions taken together seem to absolve the scholars from any duty to promote field studies of the full range and variety of religious experience, and allow them to avoid developing systematic frames of comparison. In general, religious studies start with the conviction that there is no clear, researchable relation between beliefs and social influences. This belief got them off on the wrong foot, and they were caught on the hop.

When bias is hidden to themselves, academics can, even while proclaiming a general disjunction between culture and society, blithely expound beliefs that are not independent of social influences. To illustrate this point I take Peter Berger's powerful description of two religious visions, the double historical development they represent, and his recommendation that, one having become impossible, the other be sought. He says that for millennia of human history the cosmos was treated as divine in its own right;⁵ man enjoyed a comfortable, nonconfrontational experience of religion in which every point of the compass and every physical, emotional, and social experience was sanctified. The East Asian tradition is developed continuously from this experience and leads to interior transcendence. The West Asian tradition is represented as a break in this accumulated human experience: in the West, man has had to confront God as a person and take on the enduring moral responsibilities of one person dealing with another. The two prototypes of religious experience have their typical forms of mysticism. In the first, individual personality is lost or irrelevant; in the other, it is affirmed and enhanced. Each tradition is inhospitable, hostile, or contemptuous of the mystical teachings of the other.

In the West Asian tradition, the moralizing encounter with God's grandeur and separateness has more sharply individuated the human

person, entailing a rupture between man and cosmos. Berger now calls for a theological contestation between the vision of Jerusalem and that of Benares, where

the divine does not confront man from the outside but is to be sought within himself as the divine ground of his own being and that of the cosmos. The divine here is metapersonal and beyond all attributes, including those of will and speech. Once the divine ground of being is grasped, both men and cosmos pale into insignificance or even illusiveness. Individuality is not sharpened but absorbed and both history and morality are radically relativized.⁶

While admiring the subtlety and profound insight of this characterization of two metaphysical traditions, one looks around for some way of relating it to Berger's earlier work, especially his insistence that beliefs are held because and insofar as they can be legitimated within a general structure of plausibility for the society that the believers have together constructed.⁷ It seems likely, from an anthropological perspective, that the former, the West Asian moralizing, juridical concept of God's relations with man, is plausible wherever people are concerned to pin responsibility on each other, especially for founding families, businesses, and empires, while the second is plausible for defending a social choice of withdrawal. That is, one seems plausible for conquering the world, the other for renouncing it. Since I am neither a Buddhist nor a Hindu scholar, my questions as to how deeply this particular Eastern vision penetrates the various layers of social and political life, or how much it belongs to the specialized thinking of theologians, must be shelved. I do not see how Berger, who has said so much about compatibility between attitudes (even using the expression "elective affinity"),⁸ can recommend to modern Western culture a cosmology that was notoriously uncongenial to scientific inquiry⁹—or at least I can see how he might *wish* to recommend it, but not how he can do it plausibly. The issue here, however, is that the wise men missed what was happening in the West because they were gazing toward the East.

But there is another, cruder contrast of theological perspectives that cuts across Berger's grand historico-geographical divide: to distinguish doctrines of corporate personality—doctrines that consecrate the community and elevate its ideal unity and ritual forms to the status of efficacious sacraments for all members—from doctrines of

the transcendental self. The first has the aim of consecrating society; the second encourages the believer to withdraw from society. Robert Bellah puts it vividly: "In India we find perhaps the most radical of all versions of world rejection, culminating in the great image of Buddha, that the world is a burning house and that man's most urgent need is to escape from it."¹⁰ Anyone who believes that modernization has made the consecration of society impossible to achieve may perceive the doctrine of the transcendental self as the residual option. This is evidently Berger's view.

Notice, however, the supporting religious ideas that tend to cluster consistently around each doctrinal choice. The currently less favored mystic incorporation implies more public celebration, more expressive rituals, more emphasis on instituted sacramental channels. It attracts supporting theories of mutual interdependence and tends to transform the spiritual realm into a model of what the consecrated society would be like. Furthermore, according to this doctrine in its highly developed forms, individuals should not all expect to play the same roles: in an organic system the head and the hands perform different functions. Within this doctrinal form there is often the idea that great sanctity is exceptional. Yet thanks to the mystical incorporation of individuals, the sharing of grace evens up the inequities between people or over time, the spiritually well-endowed providing a welfare fund from which benefits flow to the rest. More honor for public formality allows less pressure on personal sanctity, more tolerance for compromise, and lower levels of spiritual aspiration. By contrast, the doctrines of self-transcendence are more egalitarian, more individualist, and more optimistic about the human potential for sustaining great spiritual achievement. It seems obvious that the latter religious trend, however well it thrives in the East, also matches the favored principles of an achieving society organized in a democracy dedicated to the freedom and equality of individuals. A modern thinker who recommends the theological choice that replicates his dominant political culture can be suspected of bias: all the more implausible any claim from that quarter for the independence of religious ideas from surrounding social influences. The tradition in religious sociology that I am noting indulges its bias against public religion. It vigorously rejects sociological determinism, but does not enjoy the intellectual freedom that strict rules of comparison would promote.

Uncritical nostalgia for past ages of faith being out of place in religious studies, let us note at once that there is no good evidence that a high level of spirituality has generally been reached by the mass of mankind in past times, and none at all that their emotional and intellectual lives were necessarily well integrated by religion. Some people have been religious in a commercial way, buying and selling occult powers. Sometimes they withdrew into the desert. Sometimes they focused their religious energy on celebration of the social calendar, sometimes on obtaining states of trance. Given all this variety of religious life in our past, when we also recall that charlatanism, skepticism, and forsaken churches are also part of our heritage, we dare to question the whole modernization argument. Our modernity has not yet been analyzed in a way that explains religious decays and renewal.

Not being committed to supposing that people are always better off with religion, anthropology has a wider perspective. Anthropology was founded in a mood of rationalism in which scholars rejoiced in intellectual liberty and freedom from arbitrary ceremonial and moral constraints. Religion as such was not thought necessarily to be good for people, and *supernatural* was no more a good word than was *taboo*. If they were not rationalists, likely as not anthropologists had been bred in a Christian missionary tradition that deplored heathen darkness. Consequently, with no other axe to grind but the need to establish a comparative field, anthropologists tried to start with as unloaded a definition of religion as possible. I am not especially fond of the one based on belief in spiritual beings,¹¹ but at least it defines a field without begging any questions about the integrative power—moral, intellectual, or social—of religion. Nor does it teach that modern times show a decline from ancient standards of piety. Indeed, reflection shows that the evidence for old-time sanctity comes from suspect sources such as hagiography, panegyrics, and sermons. If we were to read even that biased evidence more critically, we would notice the professionals upbraiding the mass of ordinary people for lack of faith, as if the gift of which, we are told, modernity has deprived us was always rather the exception. Just as fundamental, there can be no evidence that there is more unhappiness and mental disturbance now than in those famous ages of faith. How can anyone possibly say? The evidence is weak, the arguments weaker. In many of the writings of religious sociology we

cannot but recognize the sermons of our childhood. The idea that humans are beings who need religion belongs to creation mythology. To say that only religion heals the sick soul is traditional evangelism. The idea that modernization is bad for religion echoes preaching that directly opposes worldliness to salvation. To insist that culture is autonomous is saying that the spirit moveth where it listeth. To have no interest in the social mechanisms by which faith is roused and sustained is to be faithful to the model of Pentecostal inspiration. It is proper to use empirical evidence only as illustrative material when the object of the discourse is spiritual counseling. None of this helps to understand better the relation of beliefs to society, yet this is the very problem at issue for understanding religious change.

The great religious renewals of modern times have not been of the expectedly appropriate kind that strengthens the transcendent sense of the interior self. On the contrary, modernization turns out to be quite compatible with the corporate personality doctrines that sacralize life in external ritual forms of celebration, compatible even with all the narrowness of spirit and intellectual closure thought to be maladaptive in modern life.¹² The old compensatory-psychological models used to assume that if the drive to get worldly satisfactions is checked, it will come out in the form of religion: thus was explained the prevalence of religious belief among the lower classes. But this modern religious behavior cannot be swept under the theoretical carpet again by classing all the new devout as marginal categories or relatively deprived.¹³ The hydraulic model of religious expression having lost its plausibility, we can learn to be wary of this new version, which says that if the road to Jerusalem is blocked, religious feeling will take the road to Benares.

The central argument about a crisis of religion due to modernization rests on the chosen definition of religion. A definition laden with good values supports the idea that religion is good for you; since modernization is bad for religion, we are in an unprecedented cultural crisis. The most exalted definition starts with subjective experience of the sacred. This follows a prestigious line of Lutheran theology leading to studies in phenomenology. Naturally, the emphasis on subjectivity rules many empiricist questions out of court. This kind of discourse tends to use examples from the world selectively, illustratively, and often wittily for an interpretative and analytic exercise. The insights gained from this tradition, to which Paul

Ricoeur is an outstanding contributor, are most brilliantly displayed in philosophy. It certainly does not fit comfortably with the empirical and systematically descriptive tradition of anthropology.

At this point we need to examine various definitions of religion. Peter Berger starts from phenomenology: "Empirically speaking, what is commonly called religion involves an aggregation of human attitudes, beliefs and actions in the face of two types of experience—the experience of the supernatural and the experience of the sacred."¹⁴ Berger distinguishes the sacred as another kind of reality, one that overlaps with the supernatural and carries redemptive significance. The sacred affirms the individual at the center of his being and integrates him within the order of the cosmos. Dupré, well versed in comparative religion, is able to dismiss this approach briskly, using ethnographic evidence and the well-known epistemological difficulties of the concept of the sacred.¹⁵ Like Berger, he recognizes that a sense of the sacred may or may not be present with a recognition of transcendent reality, but he is more ready to take the rough with the smooth in the concept of transcendence, witchcraft and angels, the fairy ring with the burning bush. His own alternative definition of religion drops out the difficult notion of the sacred and concentrates on "a commitment to the transcendent as to *another* reality."¹⁶ Because it starts from contrasted realities—that is, from evidence that can be observed in behavioral and linguistic activity—transcendence makes a more satisfactory basis for talking about religion comparatively than does a subjective feeling. One can ask about kinds and degrees of transcendence, and map the way it overlaps with ordinary reality in different cultures or between different believers. In itself this definition is less value-laden, but Dupré adds that transcendence entails integration: for him, the integrating synthesis of values is essential to the religious attitude. Thus his definition also prepares the argument for the crisis of an unbelieving world.

Daniel Bell's definition of religion rests on coherence rather than integration. He starts by defining culture as modalities of response to core existential problems, questions about life, death, obligation, and love. Within that category, religion is a set of coherent answers to the universal existential problems of mankind. Its answers may be codified into a creed and celebrated with rites, and these may be established in institutions. The general effect of religion is to create

coherence in experience and emotional bonds between those who adhere to the credal form.¹⁷ Bell's emphasis on questions and answers gives this approach to religion an intellectualist bias, one that fits an old tradition in anthropology that has produced interesting comparisons between the entities postulated in scientific theorizing and religious explanations.¹⁸ By emphasizing coherence and answers, however, Bell's definition predicates the special problems of integration faced in a secular culture. Thus this argument is also something of a closed circle.

Whenever religion is defined as integrative and, by implication, as providing something needed by humans, inquiry has cut off from its view the possibility of the integration being overnarrow, unbalanced, distorting, and so on. To stress the integrative function of religion fits the Weberian teaching that modern man suffers from lack of integrating beliefs. The scholars urbane acknowledge the crowd of exceptions to any particular thesis. Berger admits that "for every Nietzsche or Dostoyevsky there are a thousand more or less well-adjusted agnostics, more or less *Angst*-ridden atheists."¹⁹ But these disclaimers are not intended to change the arguments that proceed as if it were proved that mankind always needs the kind of integration provided by religion. The reports of anthropologists are selectively cited in support. But since there is no attempt at systematic evaluation or classification of these reports, the evidence is worth a mere wave of the hand, a salute to a body of material that supports a thesis too well attested to need further demonstration.

It seems important to challenge the modernization thesis just here by insisting that in many times and places men seem to have got on very well without being integrated by religion, unless that word is being used so broadly as to sap meaning. A theodicy in the strict sense explains the experience of suffering, evil, and death in terms of religious legitimations.²⁰ Theodicy bestows meaning on life. When I am referred back to Berger's adaptation of Weber's idea of theodicy, I am bound to admit that it is general enough to apply to most people. Following Durkheim's equation of religious feeling with acceptance of society's authority, this extended concept of religion can be found in the most unreligious of explanations, so long as they locate the individual's life in an all-embracing fabric of meanings. Berger would recognize a theodicy whenever the individual is able to transcend himself by accepting and internalizing the requirements of

society. The power of social forms achieves for the individual the transcendence that is at the center of all definitions of religion. On this approach, when Berger says religion is good for you, he means commitment to society is good for you, or again that it is good to be integrated.

Berger further recognizes that theodicies differ in the degree of rational coherence and consistency in their explanations.²¹ This suggests that a typology based on degrees of rationality would be very interesting. Unfortunately, Berger puts this project aside: "Needless to say, no attempt will be made to elaborate an exhaustive typology."²² If the attempt were to be made, he would find that we have to change the definition of religion so that it is unable to bear inferences about integrating the personality. To carry on usefully any conversation that makes sense about whether religion is good for you, one set of measures would need to be carefully constructed for judging the rational coherence of a theodicy and another set for locating and assessing the kinds of social relations for which the theodicy is used. If Berger were to argue that the theodicy of modern American society invokes two principles for explaining misfortune, one psychological and one political, anyone would recognize this part of our social environment. But surely it is located only in a very small privileged elite. Were I to counter by contending that a larger part of American society explains fortune and misfortune in terms of someone's lucky number coming up, Berger, if he admitted that it is a widespread form of explanation, would have to get down to minute detail about whether it is rationally coherent enough to count as a theodicy, as well as assessing who actually appeals to it. Anthropologists largely support Weber's idea that explanations of misfortune are the best key to cultural bias.²³ But ultimate explanations (or theodicies) are closely related to the structure of social relations, and given the variety of these, the claim that all theodicies have an integrating effect on the personality will be difficult to prove.

So much for a loaded definition that does not sharpen problems or clarify debate. I now turn to dispute the alleged effects of modernization on religious belief. With different emphases here and there, modernization is generally held to have quenched the sources of religious feeling and undermined religious authority by producing four main effects. The first is the prestige and authority of science,

which is supposed to have reduced the explanatory appeal of religion. Even if we did not ourselves know the answers, we moderns have it as an article of faith that somewhere there are, or could be, adequate scientific explanations for anything that puzzles us. This trust in science is held to be antithetical to religious faith. In consequence of the continuing development of technology and the resulting perturbation of social institutions, we moderns are supposed to enjoy more freedom of choice. Thus the second effect is that, since our lives do not unroll according to the dictates of custom, religious regulations are subject to challenge. Third is the effects of bureaucracy. And the fourth is that we are so separated from direct dependence on nature that our experience of it is too artificial to sustain religious inspiration.

Let us start with the effects of science and technology, go on to what bureaucracy does to our social experience, and then consider whether our distance from nature inhibits religious faith, and end with what is meant by saying that moderns enjoy more freedom of individual choice. There is a case for arguing that the various effects of modernization have at this point cancelled each other out, so that we are now actually closer in important respects to the general experience of preindustrial mankind. This may sound farfetched. It is less perverse to argue that these are the wrong modern influences for explaining contemporary religious behavior. It is true that the authority of science has undermined religious authority whenever religion made rash claims for revelation. But all that dust has mostly cleared away, and the demarcation has been clarified. Even in Arkansas, where "scientific creationism" is taught side-by-side with the theory of evolution, it is recognized that religious and scientific explanations mostly apply to very different kinds of problems. The collective solidarity of scientists has weakened since the 1950s, and we observe scientists quarreling more publicly than ever before. Without the debate on religious versus scientific authority, our confidence in esoteric knowledge not personally revealed to ourselves plausibly brings us closer to the civilizations of Africa and New Guinea, not further away. It is not easy to see why their experience of high specialism in knowledge corresponds so little to our lay experience that there is a big gulf between modern consciousness and all others because of science. Substantially, they rely on experts and we rely on experts. It is wrong to assume that the mysteries unveiled to

initiates in primitive culture are not so much instructions and statements about the workings of the universe as ethical and spiritual teachings. Their religious bias is often not very pronounced. If we want to base religion on the subjective sense of awe and mystery, we can hardly deny that the more modern science reveals, the more awe-inspiring (and so presumably sympathetic to religion) the universe appears. The argument that modern science is incompatible with religion is a nineteenth-century relic that depends on religion being set up as an alternative authority to science. Anyone who wants to define religion as an experience having its source in subjective feeling would be perverse to promote an argument based on defining religion as providing explanations about physical existence. What was true in the nineteenth century, when traditionalism made religion its cause, is not a part of modernism as constituted now.

As to the extraordinary growth of bureaucracy in our day, I find it difficult to accept that it has any negative effect on religious belief. The fact is undeniable that bureaucracy depersonalizes our relations with our fellow human beings. No one would deny that it reduces us to ciphers. But bureaucracy works at many levels. At one extreme it deals with us in our thousands and millions. At this level it is not reducing our intimacy with one another. We never could have known those millions personally, with or without bureaucracy. When we march in columns through the vision of those responsible for our lives as so many statistics, we are not being denied a warm human contact with one another that we might otherwise enjoy. Bureaucracy tries to treat us all the same: it universalizes the rules and applies them impersonally. The other extreme is the interface between the abstract rule and its application. Here it separates us from one another and denies human feeling. Although it is clear that bureaucratization at this level, by restricting the perception of humanity, creates problems of identity, it is not obvious why this should be counterproductive for religion. Crises of identity are at the origin of every saint's biography.²⁴ Insofar as bureaucracy reduces the range of emotional experience, it makes our lives more like those prescriptive social systems of premodern times where all feelings are institutionally channeled and individual variations controlled. Insofar as bureaucracy reduces the number of people each of us can expect to know as human beings, and increases the number of impersonal forces with

which we, with our few human friends, have to contend, it counteracts the effects of scale. The more modern bureaucracy grows, the more we hear it being compared to ancient Byzantium or the Vatican of the fifteenth century. Any good description of bureaucracy brings modern society closer to the stereotype of those small, closely regulated traditional societies that are popularly thought to be so congenial to religious belief. The fact that the bureaucracy is secular is the most important thing about it in this context, not its inherent effects, nor even its extent.

The argument about nature is largely sentimental. It is true that we have little direct experience of it nowadays. The idea that being without fresh air or clear spring water weakens our capacity for religion may stem from the definition of religion as arising in a mystic experience of wonder and awe, but it is a mistake that calls for criticism. First, let us distinguish three ways of thinking about nature. The most concrete is in reference to natural objects—trees, mountains, streams. Slightly more abstract is reference to elemental forces—wind, tides, seasons. Speaking at an altogether more abstract level, nature contrasts with culture; nature is that part of the cosmos that humans do not fabricate, that humans can learn about but cannot change. Only at this more abstract level can there be any sense in saying that moderns have a different experience of nature that might affect their disposition to religious belief. Unless Lévi-Strauss has also written in vain,²⁵ no one will argue that premoderns do not make this abstract distinction between nature and culture. Nature works by inexorable laws beyond human control. Nature is impersonal. No amount of cajolery or threats can change the conditions of nature. However much technology shifts the locus of control, so that now this or now that gets into culture or counts as nature, the important point is that the boundary itself is an artifact of culture that reflects the limits of human control. When Bell says that in the postindustrial order “men live more and more outside nature,” he is thinking of mountains and trees, and it is difficult to see what use he can make of this in an argument about religion in modern times. When he says that “for most of the thousands of years of human existence, life has been a game against nature, . . . to find shelter from the elements, to ride the waters and the wind, to wrest food and sustenance from the soil,” he is thinking of the second level of abstraction, elemental forces. It is true, as he says, that “the industrial

revolution was, at bottom, an effort to substitute a technical order for the natural order."²⁶ But I query whether the arrival of a new technical order is fundamental in these particular ways for the creation of modern consciousness. For the contrast between nature and culture always depends on culture and the state of society. Once entered into the order of life, railways and steamships, with their schedules as fixed as the tides, readily transfer to the humanly nonnegotiable side of the boundary. This is especially so for the mass of the population who do not see themselves as getting the scheduling adjusted to suit their convenience. Presumably, the sense of isolation and helplessness before one set of impersonal forces has the same effect as before another set, whether before tides and seasons or before welfare rules and parking regulations. Insofar as the experience of modern bureaucracy is an experience of ponderous regularities and inescapable laws, it qualifies fairly to replace the earlier experience of nature. Its ways are impersonal; it is as impervious of entreaty as the sky, unresponsive to bribes. I would even argue that any sense of being constrained by bureaucracy could take modern man closer to, and not further from, premoderns.

In short, the growth of science and the growth of bureaucracy between them counteract the argument that our distance from nature puts distance between moderns and religious believers of other times. For the sense of wonder in nature is deepened by the discoveries of science, and the sense of a game against nature to wrest a living from impersonal forces is still provided by bureaucracy.

The strangest conceit of all is that modernization has endowed us with greater freedom of choice than our parents. The evidence for greater freedom of individual choice, apart from sexual matters, has to be carefully dissected. The idea is a central liberal axiom upon which important institutional structures rest. Moderns certainly love to tell one another that they have free choice. We tell those who fail exams or miss promotion that they could have chosen to work harder. Thus we assert that in a free country, success and failure are largely self-chosen. Undoubtedly, some of us have more free choice than others. Social constraints limit the choice of a career in the liberal professions. The very attractive plausibility that the idea of wide-open options has for the upper classes in a supposed meritocracy should make it suspect.²⁷ Psychologists have long liked to believe that we moderns work out our intellectual problems by

systematic inference, while primitive thought and behavior run in institutionalized grooves. This draws on an established stereotype of primitive society that should be contested. Apart from being flattering to ourselves, the ascription saves the psychologists the work of thinking out a basis for comparative studies of cultural effects on cognition.

It is difficult to turn the idea of increased choice into anything that can be closely compared. There could be a wider range of trivial choices and a smaller range of weighty ones, or the other way around. If the choices we have are mostly of the bazaar kind, small, similar items purveyed at similar prices—like the choice between numerous highly standardized programs on cable television—the case for our enjoying increased options is not made. Quite the contrary, it has to be reconciled with a daily lament against the dull uniformity of our lives—the same menus, the same clothes, the same sports, and the same homes. Where is free choice? Our Viking ancestors had much more of it, free to spend a few years in Greenland, nip back to Scandinavia to help a political ally, or join a raid on Britain.²⁸

The arguments for the unique effects of modernization on consciousness do as little to explain modern secularity as to explain modern religion. It would not be possible to talk so loosely about beliefs and values, and the kinds of influences they respond to, were it not for the idea, so widely accepted, that culture is autonomous. By implication, evidence and argument are not needed to justify opinions that can only be speculations on culture, since culture partakes of the free life of the spirit, whose workings are unconstrained and mysterious. When a scholar proclaims that nature has been demystified by modernization, I know that I am going to witness some mystification of culture. The only full sense of cultural autonomy used in anthropology applies when a domain of expressive behavior has been isolated for analysis. Then the changes within a medium of expression—say, myth or dance—are treated in a restricted context that is assumed to be independent of society. In another sense, anthropologists treat culture as autonomous when autonomy means more than independence, when it means initiative to move the society. The interconnection of ideas and values with social relations is not denied. The question is, Wherein lies the initiative for change? This sense of autonomy qualifies the Marxist notion of a dependent,

epiphenomenal culture, strictly determined by the economic base. It starts from the potency of ideas for driving the rest of the system.

In a third sense, anthropologists habitually interpret changes in beliefs and values by reference to changes in the social institutions and ecological systems. This is the sense that predominates when a fieldworker is reporting on cultural change. If a reported shift in beliefs and values cannot be linked plausibly to changed institutional structures and to the material base, there will be skepticism and sharp criticism. A large experience of comparative ethnography presses the anthropologist who does not intend to lean toward historical materialism to find a way of describing the interconnection without selling out to total mystification. A simple disciplinary formula that helps to keep the lines straight is to treat cultural categories as the cognitive containers in which social interests are defined and classified, argued, negotiated, and fought out. Following this rule, there is no way in which culture and society can part company, nor any way in which one can be said to dominate the other. This discipline forces discussion of culture to clarify *who* in the society is alleged to hold a particular idea or value, *who* in the society rejects it. From this disciplinary standpoint it becomes impossible to argue that one of the containing categories can take leave of its contents or vice versa. The disciplinary constraint raises subtle conceptual problems, and the discussion of symbolism and classification necessarily becomes technical and arcane. Those issues, however, cannot be avoided without falling into superficiality.

It would be an advance to clear thinking if scholars who are not going to use the license implied by the principle of cultural autonomy would refrain from saluting it. It is out of character for Peter Berger (in the light of his solid work toward the contrary view) to state the case, as he does in the following passage on Weber's conception of reciprocity between institutional processes and processes on the level of consciousness:

Institutions, once established, develop a dynamic of their own and, in turn, have effects of their own on the level of consciousness. These effects are capable of autonomous development. Thus both institutional processes and processes on the level of consciousness are capable of developing autonomously, sometimes for considerable periods of time. . . . institutional carriers "discard" their erstwhile "baggage" of packages of consciousness.

Conversely the latter can "go off on their own" and leave behind the institutional contexts to which they were originally linked.²⁹

To assert that packages of consciousness can cut loose from any institutional anchorage and float off independently sounds very like writing a permit for one's own ideas about consciousness to fly high without empirical reference. Yet Berger is too clever to try to push this idea to its limits. The sociological underpinning of his 1973 analysis is strict and scrutinizable. He only makes use of the freedom in 1979 when he recommends that Christian theologians based in the West should consider the value to their modern flocks of the mystical forms in Indian religions.³⁰ Here he is writing *for* religion rather than about it. It is a very different exercise, and totally legitimate, to conclude a theological book by advising believers to remain open to all the possibilities of a future that lies in God's hands.

Let me choose Daniel Bell as the writer who has tried most systematically to supply a sociological argument for the disjunction between culture and society. In *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*³¹ and *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* he has developed an approach on which we can test the strength of the disciplinary formula I am proposing. He is not referring to any temporary dislocation due to modernization, but claims that all societies are at most times radically disjunctive. According to Bell, it is in the nature of both the social system and the cultural system to display different patterns of change. Everything depends, of course, on his idea of culture as expressive and symbolizing, compared with the social system, where, he says, the determinate principle is efficiency:

If something is cheaper, more productive, provides greater extraction of energy or less loss, subject to cost, we use it. This is because the technoeconomic realm is primarily instrumental. But there is no such determinate principle of change in culture. Boulez does not replace Bach or serial music the fugue. Where cultures are rooted strongly in tradition, one does not have repetition but the imminent development of stylistic forms and the absorption or rejection of new experiences as tested against the moral truths of the culture. Where cultures are syncretistic, as we find in the Hellenistic and Roman worlds and now in the contemporary world, strange needs and exotic modes jostle in the bazaars of culture, and individuals feel free to

choose those varied combinations which define their self-created identities or life-styles.³²

According to Bell, the present case of religion is to be explained by two separate causal chains, the one (institutional) leading to secularization, and the other (cultural) leading to profanation. First, let us adopt his excellent definition of secularization. It means disengagement of religion from the public sphere, from political life and from aesthetic life, "the retreat to a private world where religions have authority only over their followers and not over any other section of the polity or society."³³ The same word can be applied to the disengagement of art from public authority, as we shall see. Secularization has been caused by the trend to differentiation of institutional authority, a working out of the division of labor from industry to bureaucracy and politics. On the other hand, profanation, a result of a quite separate chain of causes, means disenchantment in the realm of belief and culture. Independent processes have produced the profane modernity whose features Bell identifies as antinomianism, anti-institutionalism, moral laxity, endless pleasure seeking, and the democratization of the erotic. He gives a very sour picture of modern culture.

Unfortunately for Bell's argument about the autonomy of culture, he includes moral values and attitudes to life, death, and obligation. Music and painting can be appropriately treated as symbolic modes, but in religious studies, we are inevitably interested in whatever it is that the modes of expression are being used to express.

As I have said, the concept of cultural autonomy varies according to which aspects of culture call for our attention. Studying a grammar does not tell you what stories the language is being used to narrate. If we intend to focus on expressive modes that could properly be called autonomous, we must suspend for the time any interest we may have in the moral or other motives of the people who are employing the expressive symbolizing system. Referring to a particular system of signs, and knowing all the possible transformations within the system, Bell can develop a hypothesis about a human drive for innovation; with these simple means he can construct a plausible swinging pendulum model of cultural change, somewhat on the lines proposed by Kroeber.³⁴ Each new cultural phase could be explained by exhaustion of possibilities in the previous pattern.³⁵ Swings of the

pendulum are the mechanism Bell invokes to explain cultural change. But, alas for plausibility, he uses it to explain changes, not in modality of expression, such as the change from Bach to Boulez, but in moral values. Exhaustion, retreat, and reaction are the dynamics of the cultural changes that Bell predicts will usher in new religious forms in the West: the exhaustion of modernism and the emptiness of contemporary culture have mitigated the harsh critical pressures from skeptical liberals, so that transcendentalist proposals are less likely to be derided. Redemptive religious doctrines will have an appeal, because of the retreat from the excesses of modernity. He also heralds a return to mystical thought as a reaction against the drab, demystified world of modernism.³⁶ This kind of reasoning would work better if mystical values, redemption, and transcendentalist theories were just modalities of expression. It loses all cogency when applied to matters of morality and metaphysics. Bell never makes sense of his claim that ideas about moral obligation follow along one path of change, while institutions follow another.

Bell's central concept of the analysis of postindustrial society is that of axial structure, not a causal system, but a central organizing frame and energizing principle. For Tocqueville's view of the *ancien régime*, the axial structure was the centralization of administration in the hands of the state. For his *Democracy in America*, the axial principle was equality. Max Weber used the process of rationalization as the axial principle for understanding the transformation of the West from a traditional to a modern society. Marx used the production of commodities as the axial principles of capitalism, and the business firm as its axial structure. Bell divides any society into three parts: the social structure (comprising economy, technology, and occupational system), the polity (regulating the distribution of power), the culture (realm of expressive symbolism and meanings), with each part ruled by a different axial principle. In modern times the social structure is ruled by the principle of economizing; the polity, by the principle of participation; and the culture, by the desire for fulfillment and enhancement of the self. He emphasizes that the gaps between these disjoined principles will widen. This assumption is declared in *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society* but never explained beyond a few reiterative remarks in a coda. He does, however, rely on it to justify treating culture quite separately in *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*.

Whereas Tocqueville, Weber, and Marx could present whole periods under one single axial principle, Bell thinks he needs three for presenting the modern situation. This is his basis for declaring culture to be autonomous. It would run against his thesis to describe postindustrial society as governed by a single axial principle. Yet this is what Bell actually does, and very effectively. He starts from the change from a goods-producing to a service economy, with its concomitant change in occupational distribution, then to the new preeminence of the professional and technical class. The new axial principle is the centrality of theoretical knowledge as the source of innovation and policy formation;³⁷ the corresponding axial structure is organization around knowledge for the purpose of social control. As Bell develops, chapter by chapter, the remarkable synthesis of the new occupational structure, the new intellectual technology, and the new modes of access to political power, the initial project of explaining the three disjointed subsystems, each with its own axial principles, each moving farther away from the rest, is silently dropped. Cultural autonomy turns out to be quite irrelevant to the main thesis. The analysis, however, is so careful, that when the idea of cultural autonomy is reasserted (in "The Return of the Sacred?"), the natural place to look for refuting evidence is in *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*. To demonstrate his ideas about cultural autonomy, the main elements of modern culture should not in any way be explainable by the chain of events in the economic and political order. Yet when we examine the features of modern culture that he regards as characteristic, the whole case falls down.

Let us consider the alleged relaxation of moral standards in his argument that private morality is a part of culture that diverges from the principles governing the economy and polity. Imposed categories of analysis account for the confusion here between Protestant rationalizing ethics in business and family life. The most die-hard proponent of cultural autonomy would hardly maintain that sex has nothing to do with marriage and the family or that these are independent of economic and social factors. Bell gives an excellent account of how changes in the economy and technology replaced inherited property with education as the necessary route of access to power.³⁸ As a supremely individual asset, education frees the individual from dependence on family control. The more that the axial

principle of organization around knowledge dominates the politico-economic system, the more it lifts social pressure from the family unit. Another way of saying this is that the new organization of society no longer requires sexuality to be controlled. Moreover, when the whole economy moves toward services, it moves away from the sexual division of labor. When women can become bankers and scientists and enter the learned professions, the sexual division of labor is no longer the dominant metaphor for all classifications and meanings. Hence, as Bourdieu has pointed out, homosexuality tends to be more tolerated with increase in educational status.³⁹ Sexual morality has indeed relaxed, but the changed standards are actually entailed by the axial shift to control of power through knowledge. It is hardly necessary to say that a shift in moral focus does not imply a lowering of standards; nor does a breakdown of law keeping imply a sign of moral laxity. Prostitution was there before we heard an outcry against it. Wives and children have long been prone to be beaten, police defied, travelers terrorized by highway robbers. The causes of battered wives, child protection, workers' safety, minority rights, and the claims of vulnerable posterity have never been more on the public conscience. The bitter debate about abortion is a sign of moral concern. Consider where antinomianism—the effort of the self to reach out beyond, to become self-idolatrous—is located. Bell recognizes antinomianism in modern culture from an upsurge of the antibourgeois values of Baudelaire and Rimbaud.⁴⁰ Artists and performers have often been segregated away from the main avenues of power. When their location in the social structure positions them outside, over and against the central political and economic hierarchies, they see their role more as expressing protest and criticism than they do in periods when they depend on personal patronage from princes and rich individuals. Moreover, being relieved of the duties of affirming their country's grandeur, they are free to explore the inner recesses of consciousness, to reach beyond the self and comment in general terms about the human predicament. If one looked only at Left Bank theatre and painting, one might get an impression of mild antinomianism—perhaps. But an anthropologist could not ignore the lowbrow mainstream culture. Soap opera, TV commercials, weekly magazines, musicals, mystery stories, and situation comedy give another impression altogether—of care for clean clothes and floors, love of good food and elegant service, concern for law and property,

laughter at complex, entwined situations, and a passionate interest in individual freedom and individual success. One can concede to Bell a clear disjunction between the values held by segregated and structurally opposed sectors of the population. High culture, insofar as it is carried by a segregated category of people, may well express a widening disjunction from the rationalizing, economizing values of industry and corporate business. But this does not at all demonstrate autonomy for culture. The rationalized economy has segregated the producers of high culture; their segregation in turn entails a particular direction for their creative energies; low culture is still there as before.

The endless search for pleasure that Bell takes as a feature of modernism sounds like the familiar complaint against other people's mindless consumerism. To the consumers themselves, consumption is less like pleasure for its own sake and more like a pleasurable fulfillment of social duties—to one's child to have a horse or swimming pool, to one's wife to buy a laborsaving piece of domestic capital equipment, to one's health to eat proteins, to oneself to have a holiday. The same piecemeal thinking that separates cultural values from social structure tends to separate the demand for commodities from social life. Remember that one of the effects of organizing society around the axial principle of control of power through knowledge is to take the lid off social mobility. Aspirations have no obvious ceilings as they did in society controlled by inherited property. A stratified society imposes implicit sumptuary controls. I have tried elsewhere to show the connection between limitless consumer spending with competitive individualism,⁴¹ and Bell has sufficiently shown how the new preeminence of scientists gives scope to individualist social ambitions. Whereas I can recognize and so explain most of his examples of modernist culture, I confess to being defeated by "the democratization of the erotic"—surely erotic pleasure has usually been an inexpensive and popular cultural resource.

The point is surely made that Bell's description of modern culture is highly selective, elitist, and unsystematic. His argument for the autonomy of culture fails. So does his account of modernism. His complicated model of culture as one of three subsystems, with three axial principles, each moving ever farther apart, is unjustified, unsustainable, and unhelpful for explaining modern religious behavior.

By contrast, Berger's account of the social structuring of modern consciousness is more consistent and perceptive. *The Homeless Mind* is in a direct line of descent from his earlier work. It is a cogent summary of how bureaucracy, work organization, and scientific ways of thought combine to isolate, confuse, and reduce the individual's subjective consciousness. In all his early work, the central idea of plausibility structure connects social life intimately with belief and knowledge and thus with culture. My criticism of *The Homeless Mind* is the passive role it gives to the knowing subject. As if in a rabbit warren, the mind runs in one direction, finds it closed off, burrows another way, only to find that closed off, too. Loops are cut, exits blocked, there is no space to turn around, all directions are closely regulated. According to Berger, modernization means that the mind cannot return upon itself to reflect or travel far enough to discover its limits, cannot confront others enough to find identity. The book convincingly exposes the insulating and isolating controls on responsibility and consciousness. Unfortunately, Berger's earlier book, *The Social Reality of Religion*, has raised expectations that his later work does not fulfill. The talk of plausibility structures should not have rested for so long at the epigrammatic, exploratory level without ever advancing even a tentative typology of the kinds of explanations that are plausible in different kinds of social structure. In the end we are left with the idea that the social order is not constructed, but received, as a set of external, mechanical constraints. There is not much scope for socially negotiated interpretation within limits strictly circumscribed by technology, productive equipment, bureaucracy, and science. Berger's modern man is always finding himself confronted by this or that. Even more contradictory—considering the emphasis in *The Homeless Mind* on the uniformity and reduced psychic space provided to modern society—when Berger comes to summarize modernity in *The Heretical Imperative*, he says that “modern consciousness entails a movement from fate to choice,”⁴² and insists that the distinctive feature of modernity is to produce a plurality of options. Here he really seems to believe that differences in life-style are a result of personal preference, regardless of the evidence from market research that they are strictly predictable from occupational and income factors. But regardless of the evidence, to make the shift from fate to choice the pivotal point for interpreting

modernization is an unwarranted conclusion from the relentless pressures to uniformity described in the earlier book.

In *The Heretical Imperative* Berger assumes that the Western religious vision has been discredited and argues that it needs to be strengthened with grafts of Eastern religious wisdom. But a stricter discussion of how choice is possible in modern conditions would raise the question of whether the graft will take.⁴³ If consciousness is so constrained by bureaucracy and the rest of the modern social package, how can one be free to adopt the options of the Orient? At least we need a theory to explain the ability of large numbers of people to resist the attraction of something they are supposed to need, such as religion.

The tale of confusion, elitism, and bias interspersed with brilliance does more than explain why religious studies were not expecting certain religious forms to be preferred or traditional religion to come threateningly alive. Its work constitutes a self-referencing argument for the close connection between culture and society, since its scholars only saw possibilities that their own social constraints allowed them to see.

The real challenge of being modern is not so much in any reduced possibility of religious belief but in accepting the increased opportunities of inquiry. The privilege of modernization is for a culture to view itself, as Robin Horton puts it, from a meta-level.⁴⁴ To recognize the big problems and to anticipate the big surprises, a discipline needs to know that its

body of knowledge does not determine unambiguously what are the self-evident areas to be explored next; since it is the consensus of the scientific elite which advises the individual scientist what to do next; since this consensus shifts with time, place, and state of affairs in the discipline and in related disciplines, thus it is very important for the scientist to understand the social and historical and philosophical context in which the consensus has been reached and how it has been reached.⁴⁵

Here I stop. Everything is wrong because the stereotype of pre-moderns is wrong. It has been constructed to flatter prejudged ideas. Some premoderns are indeed organized according to the stereotype, in highly ascriptive social institutions. But some of them are as mobile, footloose, and uncommitted as any modern academic. Some

have been gripped in the thongs of bureaucracy; some have been ruthlessly competitive individualists. In none of these variations do religious beliefs float free of social and moral pressures. When religious sociology modernizes, it will develop comparative empirical inquiry that does justice to the range of human experience, and will develop some systematic methods of asking how different moral principles become acceptable and different versions of reality plausible.

ENDNOTES

- ¹For a literature survey, see Thomas Robbins, Dick Anthony, and James Richardson, "Theory and Research on Today's 'New Religions,'" *Sociological Analysis* 39 (2) (1978):95-122.
- ²Louis Dupré, "Marx's Critique of Culture and Its Interpretations," *Review of Metaphysics* 34 (1) (1980):91-120.
- ³B. Malinowski, *Crime and Custom in Savage Society* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1926).
- ⁴Margaret Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa: A Psychological Study of Primitive Youth for Western Civilization* (New York: Morrow, 1928); and Mead, *Male and Female: A Study of the Sexes in a Changing World* (New York: Morrow, 1949).
- ⁵Peter L. Berger, *The Heretical Imperative* (New York: Doubleday, 1980), chap. 6.
- ⁶*Ibid.*, 147.
- ⁷Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Doubleday, Anchor Books, 1967); and Berger, *The Social Reality of Religion* (London: Faber and Faber, 1969; first published in the United States as *The Sacred Canopy*, 1967).
- ⁸Peter L. Berger, Brigitte Berger, and Hansfried Kellner, *The Homeless Mind* (New York: Random House, Vintage Books, 1974), 102-03.
- ⁹Max Scheler, *Problems of the Sociology of Knowledge*, trans. and ed. Manfred S. Frings and Kenneth W. Stikkers (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980): "By contrast, in all Asian cultures it was the 'sage' and a metaphysical mind that won over religion as well as science."
- ¹⁰Robert N. Bellah, *Beyond Belief—Essays on Religion in a Post-Industrial World* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), 23.
- ¹¹Jack Goody, "Religion and Ritual: The Definitional Problem," *British Journal of Sociology* 12 (2)(1961):142-62; and Robin Horton, "A Definition of Religion and Its Uses," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 90 (2)(1961): 201-26.
- ¹²Frances Fitzgerald, "A Disciplined Charging Army," *The New Yorker* (May 18, 1981):53-141.
- ¹³Bryan Wilson, *Patterns of Sectarianism* (London: Heinemann, 1967), 31.
- ¹⁴Berger, *The Heretical Imperative*, 38.
- ¹⁵Louis Dupré, *Transcendent Selfhood: The Rediscovery of the Inner Life* (New York: Seabury Press, 1976), 18-26.

- ¹⁶Ibid., 26.
- ¹⁷Daniel Bell, "The Return of the Sacred? The Argument on the Future of Religion" in *The Winding Passage, Essays and Sociological Journeys 1960–1980* (Cambridge, Mass.: Abt Books, 1980), 333–34.
- ¹⁸Robin Horton, "African Traditional Thought and Western Science," *Africa* 37 (1967):87–155. Kwasi Wiredu, in *Philosophy and an African Culture* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980) in the chapter "How Not to Compare African Thought," refers approvingly to Horton's work. See also Paul Feyerabend, *Against Method* (1975; verso edition 1978), 296–98; and Yehuda Elkana, "The Distinctiveness and Universality of Science: Reflections on the Work of Robin Horton," *Minerva* 15 (2)(1977).
- ¹⁹Berger, *The Heretical Imperative*, 51.
- ²⁰Berger, *The Social Reality of Religion*, 53.
- ²¹Ibid., 60.
- ²²Ibid.
- ²³Mary Douglas, *Cultural Bias*, Occasional Paper no. 35, of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, 1978; E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *Nuer Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), 315; Mary Douglas, *Evans-Pritchard* (London and New York: Fontana, 1980).
- ²⁴Dupré, *Transcendent Selfhood*, 24: "According to the teachings of Augustine, Luther and Kierkegaard, is the feeling of being estranged in this world not in itself religious?"
- ²⁵Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (London: Weidenfeld, 1966).
- ²⁶Daniel Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1976), 148–49.
- ²⁷Pierre Bourdieu, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* (Beverly Hills, California: Sage, 1977); in original French, *La Reproduction* (Paris: Minuit, 1970).
- ²⁸See Alan MacFarlane, *The Rise of English Individualism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979) for the distortions of history to which the assumption of a pre-Renaissance or preindustrial European society of closed options gives rise.
- ²⁹Peter L. Berger, 1973.
- ³⁰Peter L. Berger, 1979.
- ³¹Daniel Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 330.
- ³²Bell, "The Return of the Sacred?" 330.
- ³³Ibid., 332–33.
- ³⁴A. L. Kroeber, *Configurations of Culture Growth* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1944).
- ³⁵Claude Lévi-Strauss. This is only one of the possible explanations for change in mythology or artistic forms given in *The Savage Mind*.
- ³⁶Bell, "The Return of the Sacred?"
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⁴³Harvey Cox, *Turning East: The Promise and Peril of the New Orientalism* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1977), 142, quoting Jacob Needleman.

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⁴⁵Elkana, "Two-Tier Thinking," 309–26.

Per Olov Enquist

On the Art of Flying Backward with Dignity

WHEN THE STORM WAS HERE IN JANUARY, it was straight from the west; through my window in Copenhagen you could see the gulls sweep by over Sortedamm Circle above the lake; there was a thin, thin layer of steaming water just above the water's surface. Very strong wind; a storm had lain over southern Scandinavia for two days, felling thousands of trees, but here, in central Copenhagen, there were no trees to fell; and I saw the gulls flying toward the storm, struggling resolutely, but still driven backward across my window. When they passed by my window in this way, slowly flying backward, they turned their heads and looked at me, often with a quick, apologetic smile, as if afraid I would find it inappropriate or humiliating for them or improper for gulls to be flying in this manner.

It was a remarkable day: they were driven back very slowly, pressed by strong winds, and their smiles seemed to say, *Our intentions were so good, why is everything going backward?* Or perhaps it meant, *Everything used to go forward. Now it's going backward. What's happened? We're fighting just as hard as we were before!* And I felt a strong desire to open the window and say to them I don't know, I don't have any answers. The art of flying against strong head winds lies in not giving up. You don't give up, you fly with dignity.

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But not even in Copenhagen—where, for that matter, the most absurd and feeble-minded happenings in the North regularly occur—is it possible to talk to sea gulls. I sat at my worktable going through an album with pictures of my parents when they were young, but the pictures didn't match, not with what I'd believed. Days when the gulls are flying backward over Sortedammen and the pictures in the album don't go together—those days are the most interesting. When the sea gulls start to fly backward and we find this normal, it's a sign that the situation is beginning to stabilize.

I forgot to say that I'm quite sure the gulls were Swedish. The storm, on the other hand, I don't know much about.

If you're interested in Sweden, and you're a writer, and you want to describe the case of Sweden, how things happened the way they did and why, you have to realize that Sweden isn't itself, even if it seems to be.

This morning I go through the photographs from home one more time. I've had them sent. Most I've seen before. They're all from northern Västerbotten, where I was born, a thousand kilometers north of Stockholm. Also, there is the old death picture of Papa. He died when I was just six months old, in March of 1935. Big, strong young lumberjack, thirty-two years old, longshoreman in the summer and lumberjack in the winter, and then suddenly he gets a pain in the stomach and dies. Anyway, there's a custom up there in the Far North of taking death pictures, pictures of the corpse in the coffin. Some have the bodies lined up on the special bureau, a long row of horizontal people with closed eyes. The caskets look alike, sometimes the corpses too, but not Papa. I was fifteen years old and working that summer at the sawmill the first time I got to see the picture of Papa in the coffin.

It was like seeing yourself. I found the picture in a bunch of other photos, also containing two other pictures of the dead, my mother's mother and my brother—he was strangled at birth by the umbilical cord (you just see a little round mug of a face). But Papa's coffin picture was different. He looked like me, and for a moment I thought it was me and just didn't understand what I was doing in a casket. For a second I thought it was *me* lying there: I remember that I got ice-cold, and my heart kept pounding.

Then I saw it was him. It was the nicest picture in the album. It was like seeing yourself, in the future.

Now I live in Copenhagen, and observing Sweden from this point is like looking at pictures in a photograph album: you recognize everything, nothing is like it used to be, and everything has qualities of yourself.

For a long time Sweden was the well-behaved member of the Nordic family: the admired one, the one people looked up to, the successful one, the one who always did things first. These last years the attitude has changed: the model is in crisis, criticism is growing, and underneath the criticism is a sort of gloating that no Swede understands, really.

Before, everything went forward. Now it's going backward. Why? *Our intentions were so good.*

In Sweden they dreamed of being able to produce the good human being by legislation; or more precisely, of legislating evil out of existence. It was no bad dream created by wicked people. It developed out of a Christian, a Lutheran, sense of responsibility: *Am I not my brother's keeper?* The problem arose when the sense of responsibility for one's neighbor drove the society to take too much responsibility away from him: he then lacked responsibility, and the society acquired the power. It was hard to tell where the breaking point came, but someplace it was passed. Now there is constant talk of a Sweden of restrictions.

In the thirties and forties, Sweden was a social experiment that aroused international interest. Today, the example of Sweden is in many quarters condemned, scorned, ridiculed. Such response results from very hasty and, I believe, erroneous conclusions based on a changed situation.

I shall try to present a few images of the contradictory elements in the case of "the Scandinavian model."

In the wee hours of New Year's Day, in Nørrebro, in Copenhagen, we have lights burning everywhere: barricades, fire, stones thrown, shots fired, encounters between groups of young people and police. I've seen young people's rebellions and riots before: I lived in West Berlin at the end of the sixties and the start of the seventies, saw firsthand the rise, fragmentation, and disintegration of the Berlin

Left. This, though, is a different youth, a different rebellion. The squatters are there shut up in their incredibly fragile fortresses, but something has changed since 1968. Five days later the battle is decided, though the problem of course is the same.

The police have won, the occupied buildings were leveled to the ground; inside myself I register a strange relief that I'm actually ashamed of. I *didn't recognize* the uprising. It wasn't my own, wasn't recognizable, wasn't the rebellion of my generation. And the violence wasn't the same as fifteen years ago when I watched at close range the Bader-Meinhof group's breakaway from the rest of the Left in Berlin.

Copenhagen at the start of the eighties: the second youth rebellion, the first planting of the Scandinavian crisis in the earth's crust.

The violence toughens; antagonisms grow acute. And there are terribly unclear political distinctions. For a time, the squatters at Nørrebro had very loyal popular support; but now it's ebbing fast. This Nørrebro, located north of downtown Copenhagen and the only remaining large slum area, fascinating and repulsive, full of guest workers and immigrants and Danish working class, once a classic hotbed of Reds in Copenhagen—and now?

A test pattern of the problems of the Scandinavian eighties.

There's a difference between Denmark and Sweden, everybody says. In this area, too. It's true, Nørrebro is different from the Västerbotten of my childhood, with its small farm villages and Lutheran sense of moral duty and devout Christianity. The Nordic countries—an island group starting to crack—differ from one another. The young people's rebellions of the eighties simply don't exist in Sweden. Not yet. But they will come. We tend to be surprisingly late in Sweden, in fact. In 1975 the "slum storm movement" began in Holland, then Italy followed, and in 1980 this strangely elusive youth rebellion existed in such varying countries as West Germany, England, and Denmark. And an increasing number are following after: the potential latitude is great; the movement is young in many ways (sometimes with the fourteen- to sixteen-year-olds predominant). And the class base is what's most disconcerting: whatever are we to call these out-of-work people, punks, ecology activists, druggies, eighties hippy equivalents, just hanging out—these children? The new *Lumpenproletariat*, someone has suggested: actually, an unlikely phenomenon in the Scandinavia of the third way—at any rate, unlikely till ten years ago. André Gorz has attempted two definitions:

the nonclass of nonworkers or the postindustrial neoproletariat. A Danish Marxist has launched the term "the third estate."

I don't know. None of this gets to the crux of this phenomenon of the welfare crisis. I try out the expression "the army of those made unnecessary," but the word *army* gives the impression of organization, marching orders, plus clearly defined resistance. This is lacking here. But the ones made unnecessary are there, and are going to be there in greater and greater numbers.

Fifteen years after the young people's rebellions of the sixties, in other words, comes a new one; but this one appears quite different. The student rebellion that I once found myself in the middle of in West Berlin doesn't have much in common with what I live in the middle of today in Nørrebro in Copenhagen. Something has happened.

That time it was a case of a youth rebellion with a very clearly defined class basis: it was the children of the ruling class who were revolting against belief in authority and outdated educational systems. A rebellion—at any rate, in the European metropolises—with an extraordinarily well-developed theoretical superstructure, and which, moreover, questioned the structure of the entire capitalist society. The rebellion produced an ocean of writings and was very brief, partly because it represented a coming to terms *within* the ruling class. When the whole thing was over, a number of heated and conflicting appraisals would be made of what actually happened, which was self-evident since the participants came from a class that was in the habit of expressing itself. The shortest—and perhaps also most significant—assessment I saw very recently, in a Danish article about a person who had just gotten an important job as head of a bank. In the long list of qualifications, immediately after "work in the World Bank" but before "UN service," was included the additional qualification "two years in the student revolution." After this phase of professional accomplishment, he simply moved up to assume his dominant post in the central administration, occupying his natural position in the hierarchy—that is, the top.

The rebellion of the sixties was an offshoot of the economic upswing, a structural break made possible by the 1900s belief in progress at its peak, just before the curve fell off. Of course, even the sixties doomsday prophets thundering their loudest have a remarkable undertone of confidence: the revolution will be a thundering hell,

says this confidence, *but it will be*. The change is inevitable: and this faith in progress mirrors the trust that a great number of European industrial countries have in any case harbored. The rebellion of the eighties appears to be of another kind. The class base, to begin with, is quite different. Now we see the *Lumpenproletariat* of crisis and decline with rocks in hand, little interested in social-democratic dreams of building the strong society, in concepts such as “solidarity” or “equality,” in rebelling against fathers—since they were never given any authority; a *Lumpenproletariat* without hope, since no one ever convinced them that hope exists, either for work or leisure; finally, uninterested in the choice between revolution and a long march through institutions, since they have scarcely read any books, and the institutions belong to a different class: the educated, the ruling forces.

Since hope and utopia were never articulated for them, they are neither hopeless nor disappointed. They are nothing. Many people within the Left tend to get in a bad mood over exactly this *apolitical* element of the eighties rebellion—or the openly reactionary aspects of it. A few individuals in the rebellion who are interested in ecology or social issues seem to be going along hand in hand with a very large number of unpolitical types, populists or Glistrup kids: uneducated, unemployed, rightist anarchists, and antiunion youngsters who view every organization as an enemy—or else with punks and skinheads and junkies and religious mystics and God knows what all.

Of course, what unites all these disparate political positions is quite simply the fundamental physical needs—food, warmth, clothing, sex, and survival—as well as the knowledge that none of them will ever get to be part of a favored majority, or get an education or a job.

They belong to the new Scandinavian countersociety, a basically new phenomenon in a world based upon the notion of *a society we are with*, not against. It is a countersociety that’s growing and is going to keep on growing, especially considering that unemployment is structural and increasing and that the army of those made unnecessary is a part of it.

So these autumn days of 1983 I walk around the Nørrebro that may be the part of the Scandinavian eighties to be clarified first, and I don’t really know if I make a good witness. But to myself I try to

define the points that nevertheless serve to describe this hard-to-define and utterly un-Scandinavian movement, which may contain a bit of the future Scandinavian world.

What is it that makes me so aggressive?

First of all, the rebellion of the eighties is lacking in ideological motivation. The army of those made unnecessary is definitely not made up of anticapitalists, and most of them have no idea what Marxism is. The rebellion is not based on a theory; rather, it expresses itself mutely, at best in graffiti. Most of them tend to view any attempt at articulation as a trap, every interpretation as attempted ambush. It is a question of an emotional movement, unlike the intellectual one of the sixties, leading a number of people to talk about a new base for fascism, which still, no doubt, is missing the point.

Second, it is illustrative rather than analytical. It doesn't protest against injustice, displeasure, underprivilege, or unemployment. It expresses all this through violence, passivity, apathy, destruction, through the movement's irrationality rather than its force of verbal expression. Moreover, it lacks leadership. Leadership and leader types may emerge, but these are certainly not the main tendency, which essentially is anarchistic.

The fundamental emotional base, the lowest common denominator of feeling, is anxiety. Anxiety for the future (so strikingly divergent from the fifties' *trust* I grew up in), anxiety for violence, for unemployment, for pollution, decay, war, and devastation. It answers this anxiety not through analysis, organization, or work—which would be the normal Swedish social-democratic model—but through feelings, disorganization, flight, violence. It expresses its anxiety metaphorically, so to speak, transforming its life into a metaphor: others will have to interpret or verbalize this metaphor.

It writes a poem about its anxiety, but without words, only through its bearing on life.

The movement is clearly antistatist, antigovernment: it derives its ideological premises from the anarchism of the late 1800s, even if it's doubtful that a single one of them ever heard of either Bakunin or Herzen. The state is their enemy, they don't want to have anything to do with it; they just want to live in peace. Unlike their more purposeful predecessors, however, they don't express themselves

through terror, little murders, or assassination attempts; the distancing from the oppressive state occurs rather by means of escape.

Hence, they have undertaken *total mutiny*.

And what is the basic pattern? The only philosophy it expresses is pessimism. "Yesterday we were standing at the edge of the abyss. Today we've come a step closer." Submerged in this pessimism, they find that they survive, even in the Scandinavian eighties that do not resemble my own fifties. But they would rather spend this survival in an autonomous zone that they've created themselves, rather than in solidarity with the "society." Thus they express a change of attitude that is not only marginal. In the forties, every Swedish schoolchild learned to think, *l'état, c'est nous*. It was the basic social-democratic ideology that not only paved the way for solidarity with the weak, but also made possible the world's highest tax burden—borne, moreover, without grumbling.

But nobody anymore thinks we are the state.

Where I go walking through the Nørrebro of the eighties, I see not only the slums, the taken-over buildings, the masses of disqualified or runaway youths; I see also a significant change in my society. Twenty years ago the question was *how* we could change the future; today there's the suspicion that we don't *have* any future. There was an attack, then, against the prevailing powers; now there is a lack of interest, flight.

Sometimes I tell myself that the problem is private: I'm just a middle-aged, hibernating sixties type who doesn't see the prospects for a new vision of resistance. It's a consoling, fervent hope: it's not, then, a budding fascism we're seeing, but a new and softer society that will find room for the army of those made unnecessary. When the dream of permanent growth ended and the realization of permanent decline became clear, the phenomenon of decline also became visible. The children of crisis are ours, even if we don't like them.

There is in every age, and in every society, a certain "of course" that is accepted completely during a certain period. This "of course" can be introduced into a number of statements: for example, that social democracy is of course, the "lackey of capitalism," (from the early seventies); that of course "we are the state" (from the forties, as I said); and so on.

If you were to search for an “of course” in Sweden’s public debate of autumn 1983, it would most certainly be “Of course, Sweden is *förbudsstat* (a nation of restrictions) or *förmyndarsambälle* (a guardian society). This “of course” expresses a common opinion, one that develops suddenly, as a view shared in public discourse, and perhaps just as suddenly disappears. The “of course” of 1983 speaks of the crisis of the strong state, of the people’s weariness with restrictions, of their revolt against state power. It is the “of course” of new anarchism.

Are there really so terribly many restrictions in Sweden? I’m not sure. In every society you see the restrictions you aren’t used to. By the lake in Copenhagen where I live, there is a sign that says “Keep Off the Ice,” which is normal in a country that has few lakes; this is certainly not the case for Sweden, where instead it would have said “Warning: Thin Ice.” In West Berlin near the Havelsee, I read “*Schwimmen ist für Nichtschwimmer strengt verboten*,” a deeply philosophical maxim indicating that the prohibition of what you *don’t* know how to do eases the pain of inability (“Work Is Strictly Prohibited to the Unemployed”). On the street below me is a turnaround drive; in the middle of it stands a sign that says “Parking on Turnaround Strictly Prohibited.” The sign not only makes parking there physically impossible, but also, and regrettably, turning around, itself—demonstrating the efficiency of the prohibitive sign. Anybody who has ever seen this sign or others like it understands much of how Danish domestic policy works.

I see the restrictions in Denmark, Germany, or the United States easily. In Sweden I didn’t see them. Suddenly Sweden is beginning to see its own restrictions. The weariness of restrictions exists there and expresses an interesting change of attitude in our relationship to the exercise of authority: it’s seen in many areas; perhaps it is a part of the very interesting intellectual current that could be called European neoanarchism. But basically it’s a symptom of the crisis of the Swedish model. Or, the crisis of the power machinery, the conflict between the caretaking attitude and the one demanding personal responsibility. In short: a reaction to the dilemma that arises when the government apparatus that social democracy once developed to defend the weak—those without rights or power—almost without anyone taking notice, is seized by love of self and power, and begins to expand.

Sometimes it's advantageous to select a peripheral area of society in order to illustrate its central problems: anybody who wants to understand this Swedish dilemma, for example, may do well to take a look at the traffic policy in Stockholm. There we find the madhouse depicted with exceptional clarity—but also the reaction to it.

We find the model; the administrative machinery can be seen. Yet what kind of model for society are we observing?—all these bridges leading in toward Stockholm, these approach roads intended to bring cars to the inner city, where they are then chased like rats and punished, not because cars are not wanted, or because the fines produce a surplus (Stockholm Municipal Services, with its multitudinous parking meters, and its giant army of meter maids and police, is a money-losing operation), or in order to accomplish what the traffic policy in other capital cities is striving for; no, in Stockholm things are different. The traffic policy seems intended for something else, to teach a *lesson*; to instill in the human being the idea of the supremacy of the ruling and penalizing forces, the presence of the hierarchical system, the proximity of the state. In no other country in the world are these peculiar protective bodies so terribly developed, and with such clear ideological intent: the penalty as moral lesson. By imposing a permanently present screen of *punishment* over the individual's everyday life; he is reminded that the state exists, that authority wields power, and that the human being is subject to this state.

What is remarkable is not merely that these intrinsically odd patterns of punishment are laid so close together (so close, that today no parking space on the streets of Stockholm is without its meter), or that the number of employees in these protective bodies and penal units has grown by leaps and bounds in the last ten years, or that the whole operation, this whole Kafkaesque superstructure, is operating at a loss, or that the organization has been given a paramilitary character, with capture strategies, pincer movements, towaways, and battle-type campaigns—no, what is remarkable is the silent, patient, quiet resignation—the submission—that for so long has made all this possible—though not anymore. Something has happened.

It's possible that there is no such thing as a “national character.” There is, however, no doubt that patterns of acquired values—learned reactions exist, together with a great societal “of course” that sooner

or later leaves its imprint on all areas. The Swedish “of course” concerning the question of the quality of life is especially interesting. I imagine that this “of course” (in a remark that begins, “Quality of life, of course, means . . .”) differs considerably from that of other societies. For example, we tend to choose *purity* rather than *warmth*, to choose value words that in themselves mean not only a reduction of life’s dirt, but also its warmth. And for a long time this basic value, this “of course,” sped Swedish society on a road that led to a very high quality of life. But on this long climb, there was a breaking point at which something got lost. It was good to dream of breathing life’s pure air, so long as you didn’t forget that you also were supposed to *live* in this pure air. And life sometimes involves dirt: this is the painful paradox. You don’t get closeness and warmth among people in a thoroughly organized, sterilized world.

Despite this fact, air-conditioned prison cells with flowers and works of art and fresh-painted white walls are frequently criticized for their lack of *actual* quality of life, by ungrateful, shortsighted inmates who have noticed one little detail: the door is closed. They have such a strange, multifaceted outlook on the concept of quality of life.

Sweden is no locked cell, but the problem is principally the same. The pictures in my father’s old album show a Swedish lumberjack in the thirties; usually he’s sitting on lawns, under arbors, almost always dressed in neat black apparel, sometimes with an absurd little bow tie under his chin. He looks annoyingly proper, almost a bit fashionable—it doesn’t really agree with the image inside me of my prematurely dead young longshoreman-and-lumberjack father. Actually, it’s only the picture of him dead that I really like. I look at it for a long while. Outside my window are gulls flying backward, and behind me is this dilapidated Nørrebro with all its junkies and squatters and everything; round about me are several Scandinavian countries that have been built on the old social-democratic notion of permanent growth, and that now stand facing permanent decline, at a loss over what to do; and it strikes me that my stubborn staring into my father’s old album expresses something that’s probably not unique to me: the bewilderment and longing to go back to the Holy Land.

Swedes have actually only one religious belief, which is basically Zionist: they live in a diaspora in their big new cities and dream of returning to the Holy Land, the small farmer towns they once came

from. We're all *bonntijvar* (country con artist) in the diaspora, a friend of mine once wrote in a letter. I was doubtful then, but there's something to it. Back to Papa on the lawn in Hjoggböle, with the coffee cup in front of him and an indecorous urchin's twinkle in this eye: that's what we want to go back to. *One day we will all return*; the voices of captives rise skyward in chorus in the crisis of the eighties.

But we can never return, of course. We can only live where we live. And only write about it, which unfortunately we almost don't do.

I doubt that the social experiment called Scandinavia has ever been in a more interesting, more dramatic, more crucial phase than it is now. But in literature we're not dealing with it. We're writing about the picture of Papa dead. We're sitting in exile in Hallonbergen or Rosersberg or Nørrebro, and the exile surrounds us and fills our lungs: but we're writing about Papa's death picture. We are also writing about the woodcutter on the grass in his neat black suit because the roots to our societies are there, and the roots to ourselves. But there is something fundamentally strange about a literature that resembles a tree whose crown consists of roots pointing to the sky: the roots visible, but the green treetop deep down in the ground.

Yesterday I walked across a lot where they're tearing down a building at Sorte Firkanten and entered a back courtyard; two young squatters immediately came up and asked what I was doing there. I suppose they assumed I was a plainclothes policeman. I said I was a writer. Then they asked me to get out, which I did, since I also was afraid and took it that if I didn't, I would get a bicycle chain in my face. It was a perfectly normal situation: I introduced myself as a writer, and they asked me to leave.

I suppose that they believed me and *for this reason* asked me to get lost, go to hell, move my ass, and get out. Maybe they saw something. But something has changed since the Swedish proletarian writers of the thirties had their breakthrough.

Papa would never have asked a writer to go to hell. On the other hand, he never met a living writer in all his life: north of the Dala River, they were as uncommon as oak trees. Besides, the society he lived in was clearly much more like what Swedish society used to be. What is most interesting about Swedish society today is that it's unlike itself. No society in the world today is more unlike itself than

the Swedish one, which makes it easy to tell it apart from all the others.

Actually, this unlikeness creates a very sharp, clear identity: a knife-sharp, painfully present contour in the face of the society whose image I'm always trying to put down on paper.

I forgot one thing, which complicates the picture. Several years ago I wrote a novel called *Musikanteras uttåg* (*The Exit of the Musicians*), a novel about my own background and about a family in the north of Sweden at the turn of the century. This book has a second part that's still not written: it deals with the same family's emigration to Argentina in 1910. Two thousand laborers from Norrbotten went off to Brazil and Argentina; within a year, half of them died in the jungle of disease and epidemics, some returned, and a few hundred stayed.

They're still there, in Misiones; I visited them and lived there awhile. They *språkade* a Swedish that was like an old Bible translation, and lived the way they did at the turn of the century, scarcely any better. They loved their Swedish heritage. They kept asking how things were in Sweden. I couldn't answer them, since I hardly had the answer they could understand.

Much later, since I've returned and because this unwritten second part remains unwritten, I realize what I've seen. The disaster in the jungle where they died, or fell destitute, developed from a paradigm that was the opposite image of Swedish society: it was the ultimate consequence of the notion of man being alone, of organizational attempt being impossible or meaningless, of people being their own enemy. The Sweden that they left picked the opposite path, that of total organization, and now lives in another sort of dilemma. The images of the two alternatives are each other's postulates, just as the light of the negative becomes the dark of the picture. If the images are put together at a certain spot, at some point in the grain, there is an answer, a possible solution.

Maybe that is what the sea gulls over Sortedammen are trying to tell me: it's harder to fly slowly backward than forward. It demands much more—of people, as of gulls. It's easy to sulk, lose composure, grow desperate. Then all is lost. But the dilemma of gradual retreat actually makes us face far more important existential problems than those of slow progress.

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And so I smile back at my backward-flying friends, the gulls, and whisper: Hold out. Fly with dignity. It's being decided right now, all of it. Hold out.

Translated by Verne Moberg.

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A reprint edition of the Summer 1986 DÆDALUS

ISBN 0-8191-6678-2 (paper) \$12.75

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Acknowledgments

We owe much to the foundations that have supported the *Dædalus* issues from which essays in this volume were selected. We wish to thank:

The American Scandinavian Foundation

The Carnegie Corporation

The Church Society for College Work

The Commonwealth Fund

The Edgar Stern Family Fund

The Ford Foundation

The German Marshall Fund

The Lilly Endowment

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